

leader in the university student movement "Otpor" (Resistance), was attacked and beaten on the street in front of his Belgrade home by masked thugs with bats. As they fled, their comments indicated the political nature of the attack.

During the first week of February, Milan Panic, the Serb-American pharmaceutical executive who is a leader of the Alliance for Change, the main coalition of political opposition to Milosevic's ruling Socialist Party, has had his Serbian subsidiary company taken over by the authorities. The purpose was likely two-fold: to intimidate Panic and to gain hard-currency assets.

On March 8, Slavko Curuvija, the chief editor of newspaper Dnevni Telegraf and the new magazine Evropljanin, was sentenced along with two of his journalists to five months in prison by a Belgrade court for "spreading false reports with an intention to endanger public order." They remain free on appeal.

Mr. Speaker, these assaults on freedom demonstrate that Milosevic feels vulnerable to democratic forces which do, in fact, exist in Serbia, forces which may indeed be growing. Indeed, the Serbian Government undertook to make a paper prepared by the hearing witness from the United States Institute for Peace and openly circulated at that same hearing into an alleged confidential CIA document which showed, they alleged, that the U.S. Government was plotting to overthrow the Belgrade government.

Despite his insecurity at home, Milosevic does feel sufficiently secure in a U.S. policy which seemingly needs his presence for implementation for the Dayton Agreement in Bosnia, and to get an agreement in France on Kosovo. Our dependence on him, he reckons, means we will not seek to undercut his dictatorial power. The clear lack of attention many senior Administration officials have paid to Serbia' democrats has only reinforced this feeling in Belgrade.

Mr. Speaker, this must change. The actions against Karajcic, Panic, Curuvija and countless other advocates of a democratic Serbia must be condemned not with words alone. The United States must stop dealing with Milosevic directly. The United States must protest his assault on innocent civilians when they occur. The United States must encourage democratic change in Serbia, and assist those who promote this change from within, the true Serbian patriots.

One way in which the Congress can help in this regard is to move quickly on the legislation I have just introduced, H.R. 1064, the Serbia and Montenegro Democracy Act of 1999. This Act would ensure adequate attention is paid to democratic forces in Serbia and Montenegro by those allocating U.S. democratic assistance. The legislation has bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about developments in Serbia generally, and the incidents involving Helsinki Commission hearing witnesses in particular. As Chairman of the Commission, I am committed to making sure that the people in Serbia have the same rights and freedoms which so many other Europeans enjoy and take for granted, the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and defined in subsequent OSCE documents. The

suppression of these rights in Serbia is unacceptable, it ultimately will prove untenable, and it must change sooner rather than later, not only for the sake of the people in Serbia but all people in south-central Europe.

HONORING GENES THOMPSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the unique community service of Genes Thompson.

Genes, a native of Greenville, North Carolina, has lived in the East New York community for the past 20 years with her husband, Dwight and their son, Anthony. As an East New York resident, she has devoted a great deal of her time to helping the community to be a better place in which to live. For example, Genes has been a member of the 76th Precinct Community Council since 1980 where her efforts and devotion has been instrumental in uplifting her community.

The Metropolitan Jewish Geriatric Center has employed Genes for the last 25 years as its Chief Switchboard Operator. She is also a shop delegate for Local 1199, 144 division for the past 19 years. In addition to these daily responsibilities, she is an active member of Liberty Baptist Church where she serves on the Pastor's Aid Committee as well as working with staff of Thomas Jefferson High school. Genes' civic activism includes membership in the Milford Street Block Association and work as a volunteer with the political campaigns of Senator CHARLES SCHUMER and New York State Comptroller Carl McCall.

I commend the achievements of Genes Thompson, a true community activist, to the attention of my colleagues.

HONORING MR. CHANCY WHEELER OF WEST UNION, OH

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a distinguished resident of West Union, OH, in the Second Congressional District, Mr. Chancy Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler will turn 100 years old on June 5, and he is being honored by the Government of France for his military service in the First World War.

Mr. Wheeler was born in 1899 in Mount Olivet, KY. He volunteered for the Kentucky National Guard, and then transferred into the United States Army in 1917. As a member of the First Infantry Division, 28th Regiment, First Machine Gun Brigade, he served in 1918 in the Aisne-Marne offensive, the St. Michiel offensive, and the Meuse-Argonne offensive. He was wounded twice in battle. For his actions, he received the Silver Star medal on July 21, 1918. He also received a 75th Anniversary Commemorative Medal for World War I veterans from the U.S. Army.

Mr. Wheeler will receive the French Legion of Honor in a ceremony organized by VFW Post 3400 in West Union, OH, on March 12. In his letter conveying the Legion of Honor to Mr. Wheeler, French Ambassador Bujon de l'Estang wrote: "The Legion of Honor is conferred on you by the French government as a sign of the high esteem my country has for you who personally contributed to the decisive support the United States gave to French soldiers in the defense of their country during World War I."

Chancy Wheeler distinguished himself in the struggle to "make the world safe for democracy" and served his country with honor. All of us in the Second Congressional District are grateful for his service and commend him on his recognition by the French Government. I wish him health and happiness in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "SONNY" RESSEL

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to pay tribute to the memory of William (Sonny) Ressel.

Sonny Ressel was neither a politician nor someone who took on the responsibility of helping others because of some ulterior motive. Despite working long hours, Sonny Ressel always found time for his family and the community that he loved.

Before his untimely death on February 8th, Sonny Ressel served as the Co-President of the New Kensington Neighborhood Association where he strove to improve his neighbor's quality of life.

Sonny Ressel was a man of action who dedicated his life to helping others regardless of who they were. Through his efforts, broken streets and traffic lights in Kensington were quickly repaired. In response to a growth in the number of hearing impaired residents in the community, Sonny secured the installation of "Deaf People Crossing" signs alerting motorists that some pedestrians would be unable to hear their horns.

With his loving wife Ricki, Sonny Ressel helped the old and the infirm of our community. They did this by making people laugh and reminding them that they were not forgotten.

Friends and admirers have likened Sonny Ressel to an angel who was put on earth to help others and to spread happiness. I can think of no better tribute for a man who always rose to the challenge of helping meet the needs of others.

Sonny Ressel was an innovator and beacon of good will to all those he came into contact with. On behalf of myself and my constituents, I would like to extend my condolences to the Ressel family on Sonny's untimely passing and to thank them for allowing us to share in the bright light that was his life.