

INTRODUCTION OF THE ISRAEL
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ACT

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation, along with Congresswoman NITA LOWEY, in an effort to correct a grave injustice being committed against our friend and ally in the Middle East; Israel.

Many of my colleagues may not be aware that a number of nations have not established full diplomatic relations with Israel. Israel currently maintains diplomatic relations with 162 countries. Approximately 25 countries do not have any diplomatic relations with Israel at all. Another 4 countries have only limited relations.

In order for Israel to be a full member of the world community, she must establish diplomatic relations. The Israeli Embassy tells me that Israel is actively seeking to establish and upgrade their relations with several countries. This has proven difficult with many of the Islamic nations, such as Pakistan and Indonesia.

In 1994, Representative Lee Hamilton had language included in the State Department Foreign Relations FY94-95 Authorization bill that stated the Secretary of State should make the issue of Israel's diplomatic relations a priority and urge countries that receive U.S. assistance to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

Unfortunately, despite this provision, the U.S. government has not made this issue a priority.

At the beginning of this year, during an International Relations Committee hearing, I asked Secretary of State Madeleine Albright about Israel's diplomatic relations with countries receiving U.S. assistance. The Secretary replied that she considers Israel's relations with the world community and other nations essential to peace and stability and has been actively encouraging countries, such as Indonesia, to establish full relations with Israel. I could not agree more.

I believe the U.S. should be doing everything possible to help Israel establish these relations. In fact, Congresswoman LOWEY and I worked together to include a provision in the Report to the FY 2001 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill that urges Israel's Arab neighbors to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

However, more needs to be done. That is why Congresswoman LOWEY and I are introducing the "Israel Diplomatic Relations Act," to help promote Israel's role in the international community.

Our legislation spells out clearly the importance of Israel's status in the international community and the need for Israel to receive the recognition she deserves. It also requires an annual report to Congress by the U.S. Department of State on U.S. government activities to help promote Israel's diplomatic relations in the world community.

This report is of critical importance because it will require our embassies to focus attention on Israel's diplomatic relations.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

I urge my colleagues to help us promote peace and stability in the Middle East by supporting and cosponsoring this critical legislation.

HONORING NORM ANTINETTI

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a very special person, Mr. Norm Antinetti as he enters into a well-deserved retirement after 40 years of dedicated service to Oakdale High School.

Norm's list of accomplishments is impressive. He has the distinction of holding the longest tenure in the history of Oakdale High. During that career he coached football, baseball and the love of his life, basketball.

There's a saying in Oakdale, Mr. Speaker: If you grew up in Oakdale and played basketball, you know Norm. He's as much a fixture on the court as his red Oakdale Mustangs baseball cap or jacket is on him.

As a coach, he guided teams to four Valley Oak League championships and won four other major tournament championships. He coached the Kiwanis Large Schools South All-Star basketball team twice and started Oakdale's 30-year-old Rotary Holiday Classic Basketball Tournament.

He's been named the California Interscholastic Federation—San Joaquin Athletic Director of the Year, Stanislaus District Coach of the Year, Valley Oak League Varsity Coach of the Year and Fellowship of Christian Athletes Coach of the Year to name only a few of his accolades.

It is rare that we are able to recognize such a selfless person. He is a fitting example of what is right about getting involved with our young people and being a positive role model for them.

I consider it a privilege to call him friend and am very proud to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Norm Antinetti.

HONORING MINNIE ELIZABETH
SAPP

HON. VAN HILLEARY

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great joy that today I honor Minnie Elizabeth Sapp, who recently celebrated her one-hundredth birthday. Mrs. Sapp had the rare fortune of seeing a complete century unfold. It was on July 12, 1900 that Mrs. Sapp was born—in the log house built by her grandfather, James Waymon Mitchell, on Lost Creek in White County, and it was on July 12, 2000 that we celebrated her one-hundredth birthday.

On Christmas Day in 1921, Mrs. Sapp married Homer Floyd Sapp in the same room in the log house where she was born. The couple traveled by buggy to Homer's father's home, at what is now Rim Rock Mesa at Bon

July 27, 2000

Air. Six years later they moved to a forty-acre farm on Corolla Road.

The couple had seven children. The two boys died as infants, and sadly one daughter, Helen, passed away at 14. The other four daughters survived: Josephine, Norma, Evelyn, and Betty. Although her husband Homer died in 1980, Mrs. Sapp continues to live at the farm that the couple moved to 73 years ago.

In 1993, Mrs. Sapp wrote her personal memoirs, and among her memories are recollections of lighting the house with coal lamps and making lye and soap. The United States has changed much since the days of her childhood, but her memories of quilting, walking barefoot to free school and later attending boarding school at Pleasant Hill Academy, carrying water from the spring, and keeping the fire going year round have shaped a strong, loving woman who is devoted to her family and friends.

Two weeks ago I had the honor of attending Mrs. Sapp's birthday celebration, and on the 16th of July the Bon Air United Methodist Church honored her with a service, singing, and presentation of a plaque. The family and friends who surround her serve as a testament to the impact this amazing woman has on all who meet her.

Truly, Minnie Elizabeth Sapp is a blessing to her community. Mrs. Sapp's devotion to family and religion has seen her through 100 years, and I am confident that it is her love of life which will fill every day that is to come. That is why it is in the spirit of all who know and love her that I wish to congratulate Mrs. Sapp on her one-hundredth birthday celebration.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY FRANK PUCKETT

HON. CHARLES W. STENHOLM

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, today I draw my colleagues' attention to the years of service that Mr. Frank Puckett has provided to the city of Abilene and I congratulate Frank upon his retirement from the Abilene Reporter-News, the largest newspaper in the 17th Congressional District where he was employed for 19 years. Both with the newspaper and in the community, Frank's leadership has been tireless and productive.

It took Frank awhile to find his way to us out in West Texas. Having begun his life in Indiana, he journeyed through the wilderness of Ohio and Illinois before making it to the Promised Land of Abilene in 1981. We're glad he persevered.

Frank joined the Reporter-News in 1981 as executive vice president and general manager. It took him only two years to be promoted to the position of president and then in 1995 he assumed the publisher's mantle.

While his role with the newspaper has been significant, it may be that his involvement with the city of Abilene has been even more far-reaching. During the 1980s when the Texas economy presented numerous challenges to

local residents, Frank was instrumental in providing the leadership necessary to move towards greater economic development and security. He chaired ACT-NOW, which successfully orchestrated Abilene's economic recovery. He also served on the boards of the Chamber of Commerce, the West Texas Rehabilitation Center, Abilene Industrial Foundation, Hendrick Home for Children, Tax Increment Financing District, Abilene Improvement Corp and Abilene Community Foundation.

With Dyess Air Force Base fulfilling such a significant role in Abilene's economy, Frank took on a major responsibility when he became chairman of the Military Affairs Committee for Abilene's Chamber of Commerce. In that capacity, he has focused on helping the base secure new missions and update current facilities. With Frank, I share a fond hope that Dyess will one day house the Air Borne Laser program. In recognition of his contributions, Frank has been named Outstanding Citizen by both the Strategic Air Command and the Air Mobility Command.

While all of us in Abilene join in wishing Frank the very best in his retirement from the newspaper, none of us expect or hope to see Frank's retirement from all of the other many activities which have made his presence in Abilene so valuable. We know that he has much yet to contribute and we look forward to our continued mutual efforts to strengthen our beloved community and District.

COMMEMORATING HUMBOLDT COUNTY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NINTH ANNUAL RELAY FOR LIFE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Larry Olson and the citizens of Humboldt County, California for their recent efforts in the fight against cancer. At the Ninth Annual "Relay for Life" on July 14th and 15th, 2000, the local chapter of the American Cancer Society raised a record-breaking \$640,000.

Mr. Larry Olson was the event's chairman and under his leadership the Humboldt County "Relay for Life" was the top fundraising community in the state of California and one of the top ten nationwide for the third consecutive year. The spirit and the generosity of the people of the North Coast are what make this "Relay For Life" such a success. Hundreds of individuals, small businesses and organizations made generous donations. Their dedication and commitment should echo across the nation.

This 24-hour event embodies the spirit of community and fellowship. There were 232 teams who competed, each consisting of 12 members. Combined with hundreds of volunteers, the total number of participants exceeded 3,500. Among the hundreds of participants were over 500 cancer patients and survivors. Their participation underscores the sense of hope that one day there will be a cure to this devastating disease.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we acknowledge the outstanding accomplishments of Larry Olson and the people of Humboldt County for their effort in the fight against cancer.

THE HOUSING FINANCE REGULATORY IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3703, the Housing Finance Regulatory Improvement Act, if enacted, would enhance the regulatory structure of the housing GSEs—Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBanks).

While I do not agree with every proposal under this bill, I support advancing a constructive dialogue between Congress, the housing GSE's, their regulators and all industries involved. Continued work is needed to guarantee GSE mission compliance to forestall unfair competition into non-mission related products, as well as to ensure GSE safety and soundness to limit taxpayer liability.

Currently, the housing GSEs are under good management and are in sound operating condition. That is why it is important to examine the systemic risk that these entities may pose to our financial system at the present time.

Overall, I believe that the duties of the housing GSE's are somewhat divergent. On one hand, they have a mission to homebuyers to maintain liquidity in the housing markets and to stabilize mortgage rates. On the other hand, they are publicly traded companies that must return a profit to their shareholders. The means for a high shareholder return is manipulation of the GSE's implicit government subsidy, and there is a fine line between how much of the subsidy's benefits should be returned to homeowners and how much should be passed on to shareholders.

Regardless, the GSEs have played an important role in bringing together homebuyers, lenders and capital from across the country and reducing mortgage rates. Again, while I do not support all provisions of H.R. 3703, I believe it is a step in the right direction. Introduction of this legislation has been a catalyst for serious discussion over the housing GSE's mission and the implications of financial failure. In cosponsoring this bill, I want to advance a dialogue to make certain that taxpayers and the private sector are protected from excessive risk and unfair competition.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LIVES OF LT. CMDR. GARETH RIETZ AND LT. RAYMOND O'HARE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the unfortunate deaths of two Navy test pilots

at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station on July 11, 2000. Lt. Cmdr. Gareth Rietz, 33, and Lt. Raymond O'Hare, 33, lost their lives while training to become test pilots at the prestigious U.S. Naval Test Pilot School. The students were flying on a familiarization flight aimed at refreshing their flying proficiencies following a short break. Both seniors, they were experienced aviators and were scheduled to graduate in December 2000.

Commander Bob Stoney, the Naval Test Pilot School's Commanding Officer, in an interview with the Washington Post following the incident, commented, "What they would have wanted us to do is get back on our horses and ride." There are safety and legal investigations under way, but life is returning to normal as a new class is beginning its training.

Gareth Rietz, a native of Washington State, "was the cheerleader for everybody, the coach, the quarterback," Stoney said. A graduate of Washington State University, he leaves his wife and daughters behind.

Raymond O'Hare, a native of Illinois, was, as Stoney said, "a tremendously gifted man who seemed to have a calling to higher things. He was extremely smart, good at everything he did." A graduate of Harvard University, he is survived by his wife and three children. Before he died, he had been selected for the grade of Lieutenant Commander.

Their untimely deaths should prompt us all to take a moment to reflect on the sacrifices that they and thousands of others have made to keep this Nation safe and free. We should also take this time to re-evaluate the benefits for our troops and their families. It is easy for us to take the military for granted in this time of relative peace and prosperity. But the crash at Pax River should remind us that what our military does each and every day is still dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in expressing our sincere condolences to the families of these two proud Americans who have sacrificed their lives for their Country. We should all pause to reflect on the loss of these two distinguished individuals who were being trained as test pilots, an occupation that directly benefits the safety and performance abilities of aircraft weapons systems. I also would ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the men and women who are left behind at the Test Pilot School to carry on the proud mission of this small elite program which has produced so many American heroes, both the famous, including John Glenn, dozens of Space Shuttle astronauts, and the unsung heroes who quietly dedicate their careers to pushing the technology envelope for aviation systems.

Past and present members of the U.S. Armed Forces deserve to have our full and continued support and we should not wait for another tragedy like the one at Pax River, to remind ourselves that our troops are in danger on a daily basis, whether in harm's way or preparing to go into conflict. The men and women of our armed services are defending this nation so that we may go about our daily lives feeling safe and protected. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the Congress to ensure that we provide them with the latest and best weapons systems