

speeches and events along a "whistle stop" tour in several other communities in the county.

Butler County is a thriving part of Western Pennsylvania with some of the fastest growing areas in the region and in the state. Agriculture and industry coexist in this community providing jobs and opportunities to the hard-working families who call Butler their home. With its beautiful state parks and gamelands, Butler County attracts visitors from all over the state seeking to enjoy the forests and lakes that make this area of Pennsylvania so unique.

On my many trips to Butler County I have received nothing but good wishes from the people of this community. Their support has been invaluable to me during my years in Congress, and I will never forget their kindness.

Once again, I urge my colleagues to rise and recognize the citizens of Butler County on this truly momentous occasion. Their commitment to family and community spirit represent the finest qualities of the Fourth Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JAMES K.
PASQUARIELLO

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the deeds of an outstanding Fire Chief and a valued member of my community, James Kenneth Pasquariello of Paterson, New Jersey. Jim is being honored tonight by the Northern New Jersey Council of the Boy Scouts of America. It is only fitting that we are gathered here in his honor, as he is named Boy Scout's "Man of the Year," for Jim defines caring and generosity of spirit.

Chief Pasquariello, a member of the Passaic Valley High School class of 1963, found his calling at Passaic County Community College in Paterson. It was there that he received an Associate Degree in Fire Science Technology. Jim also possesses a Fire Official license from the Bureau of Fire Safety of the State of New Jersey.

Jim's time spent working in the fire safety has instilled the attributes necessary for him to become the stellar positive force in the community he has now become. It was the small steps in the beginning of his career that taught him the fundamentals that would make Jim a role model to the firefighters he now leads.

Known for his ability to get things done, Jim Pasquariello was appointed to the Paterson Fire Department on August 1, 1968. He was promoted to Captain on August 1, 1980. On February 19, 1998 Jim attained the rank of Battalion Chief. Always respected and well liked, he continued to rise within the department. When Jim became Deputy Chief on June 3, 1994 he assumed command of Tour Number 3 as Shift Commander. Only three short years later, Jim reached the pinnacle of his fire service career when he was promoted to Chief of the Paterson Fire Department on

October 31, 1997. During his distinguished career of 31 years of service, Jim has served in numerous fire companies in various capacities. In addition, he has been cited on three occasions for conduct above and beyond the call of duty.

As the Chief of the Paterson Fire Department, Jim Pasquariello is a member of six professional associations: the Paterson Firefighter's Association, the International Association of Firefighters, the New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs' Association, the New Jersey Career Fire Chiefs' Association, the Passaic County Mutual Aid Association and the New Jersey Firefighter's Relief Association. Chief Pasquariello also serves on the Eighth Congressional District Public Safety Advisory Board, the New Jersey Department of Personnel Advisory Board and is a member of the Passaic Valley B.P.O. Elks Lodge #2111.

A native of Paterson, Jim was born on October 13, 1945 at Paterson General Hospital to James, Sr. and Cecilia. On January 15, 1966, Jim married his sweetheart, the former Marsha Helene Smith at Our Lady of Pompeii R.C. Church in Paterson. Jim is the father of three lovely daughters, Janine Brownley, Virginia and Suzanne.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not say for the record that as the former Mayor of the great City of Paterson, New Jersey, I had the distinct privilege of working closely with Jim Pasquariello on a regular basis. He was and still is the epitome of devotion and professionalism. More than all this, however, I am proud to call Jim my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Jim's family and friends and me in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community of James Kenneth Pasquariello.

HONORING REBECCA DICKISON OF
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate and honor a young Alaska student from my district who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in her community. Rebecca Dickison of Anchorage, Alaska has just been named one of my state's top honorees in The 2000 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on the most impressive student volunteers in each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Dickison is being recognized for her hard work and dedication in collecting new and used books and organizing a reading corner for children at the Intermission Crisis Nursery. She has volunteered her time to bring happiness and joy to those in need.

In light of numerous statistics that indicate Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, it's vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contribution this young citizen has

made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Ms. Dickison are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

The program that brought this young role model to our attention, The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, was created by The Prudential Insurance Company of America in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995 to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are critically important and highly valued, and to inspire other young people to follow their example. In only five years, the program has become the nation's largest youth recognition effort based solely on community service, with nearly 75,000 youngsters participating since its inception.

Ms. Dickison should be extremely proud to have been singled out from such a large group of dedicated volunteers. I heartily applaud Ms. Dickison for her initiative in seeking to make her community a better place to live, and for the positive impact she has had on the lives of others. She has demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserves our sincere admiration and respect. Her actions show that young Americans can, and do, play important roles in our communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL
DIALOGUE IN KAZAKHSTAN

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last December President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan was in Washington for the annual meeting of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Joint Commission. The purpose of these meetings, which are held alternately in the United States and Kazakhstan, is to promote political and economic cooperation between our two countries. The United States side regularly presses the government of Kazakhstan to improve its human rights record and to undertake much-needed political and economic reform.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that in December U.S. officials pressed the Kazakh participants because of serious American concerns about the sham parliamentary elections which were held last October, increased corruption, and an increase in abusive action taken against opponents of President Nazarbayev's increasingly repressive government.

Prior to last December's meeting and in an apparent move to blunt the expected pressure from the United States, President Nazarbayev issued a statement on November 4 saying that he was ready to cooperate with the political opposition and that he would welcome the return to Kazakhstan of former Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, the exiled leader of the principal opposition party.

On November 19, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kazhegeldin responded to President Nazarbayev by calling for a "national dialogue" to examine ways to advance democracy, economic development and national reconciliation in Kazakhstan. Similar national dialogues have met with success in Poland, South Africa, and Nicaragua. Mr. Kazhegeldin pointed out that convening a national dialogue would be an ideal way to initiate cooperation between the opposition and the government. Unfortunately, President Nazarbayev has reacted with stony silence to Mr. Kazhegeldin's proposal. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this is not the first occasion when Mr. Nazarbayev has reneged on his promises or taken actions that undermine democracy and economic reform in Kazakhstan. He has reneged on a pledge he made in November to ship oil through the proposed Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. He continues to refuse to settle investment disputes with foreign companies that have lost millions of dollars because the government failed to honor its commitments. He arranged to have a kangaroo court convict an opposition leader for having the temerity to criticize Mr. Nazarbayev's government.

Even more troubling and more threatening to our national security, an investigation and trial in Kazakhstan have failed to find anyone responsible for the delivery last year of 40 MIG fighter aircraft from Kazakhstan to North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, the Administration must stop turning the other cheek every time Mr. Nazarbayev commits another outrage. The cause of freedom, democracy, and economic reform will continue to suffer in Kazakhstan unless the Administration strongly supports the national dialogue along the lines proposed by Mr. Kazhegeldin and takes action to press the government of Mr. Nazarbayev to stand by its commitments.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Administration should also insist that the government of Kazakhstan make a minimum of one hour per week available for use by the opposition. In a country where the government still controls the media, this is a minimum for democracy to have any hope at all to develop along democratic lines. We also ought to insist that the democratic opposition be permitted to be provided a printing press to replace those that have been confiscated by the government.

Mr. Speaker, the shocking lack of democracy in Kazakhstan and deliberate government actions and policies that have restricted political and economic reform are a matter of great importance to the United States. It is essential that the Administration press Mr. Nazarbayev to take remedial steps quickly.

INTRODUCTION OF A HOUSE RESOLUTION TO RESTORE THE UNITED STATES ASSAY COMMISSION

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce my introduction of a House Resolu-

tion designed to re-authorize the creation of the United States Assay Commission.

The Assay Commission was established in 1792, and operated uninterrupted until 1980 when it was finally abolished. During that time, it was the oldest continually operating committee in the federal government and brought in individuals to maintain oversight over a narrow aspect of the executive branch.

Originally authorized as part of the nation's first Mint Act of April 2, 1792, the purpose of the Assay Commission was to examine the nation's coins on an annual basis and certify to the President, Congress, and the American people that gold and silver coins had the necessary purity, the proper weight, and necessarily, value.

Among the earliest members of the Assay Commission, statutorily, were Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe and Alexander Hamilton. Starting about 140 years ago, some members of the general public were invited to participate, and when the Coinage Act of 1873 was passed, it codified that the President had the authority to appoint members of the Assay Commission from the general public at large. That practice continued for more than a century, though after 1970 there were no longer silver coins to review when their production was discontinued.

By the time that the Assay Commission was abolished in the Carter Administration as part of the President's re-organization project, it no longer had any valid function; the nation did not produce gold or silver coinage, whether of a circulating or of a commemorative nature.

Starting in 1982, the Mint again began producing contemporary commemorative coinage from .900 fine silver. By 1984, gold commemorative coins for the Olympic games were added, and since then the U.S. Mint has produced and sold hundreds of millions of dollars worth of gold, and silver commemorative coinage. Since 1986, the Mint began producing gold, silver and platinum bullion coins which are widely traded the world over.

Mr. Speaker, in the mid-1980's, lacking the outside oversight previously provided by the Assay Commission, a problem was discovered in one of the Mint's bullion products. It appears, from the records, that some fractional gold eagle coins (those weighing less than ounce) did not have the proper fineness or weight in gold. This caused a serious marketing problem in the Far East, and confidence in this uniquely American product went by the wayside.

Today, the United States Mint is a business that, were it privately-controlled, would constitute a Fortune-500 corporation. The monetary bulk of this product—not the circulating coins—are gold, silver, and platinum.

With the re-emergence of U.S. produced gold, silver and platinum coins, I understand that an Ad Hoc group of former presidential appointees, all former Assay Commissioners, has suggested that it is time to restore Assay Commission oversight of the U.S. Mint. I share this Ad Hoc group's belief that the Mint's operations will only be enhanced by restoring the historic role played by the Assay Commission.

Mr. Speaker, an article advocating the restoration of the annual Assay Commission written by Fair Lawn, New Jersey Mayor David L. Ganz, recently appeared in Numismatic News,

a weekly coin hobby periodical. I would ask that this article be reprinted, in full, in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I urge my colleagues to help me re-authorize the Assay Commission by cosponsoring the legislation that I have introduced today.

[Article appearing in Numismatic News (Weekly), October 5, 1999]

TIME TO CONSIDER REVIVING THE ASSAY COMMISSION

(By David L. Ganz)

Let me set the stage. A quarter century ago this past February, Richard Nixon was in the final throes of his star-crossed Presidency, though no one yet suspected that Watergate was about to become his ultimate downfall and lead to probable impeachment.

American coinage of 1974 was devoid of silver, and private gold ownership had been illegal since 1933, except for rare and unusual gold coin of that era or earlier, unless the Office of Domestic Gold & Silver Operations gave a rarely sought, seldom-granted license to acquire the particular specimen. As Washington hunkered down for a difficult winter storm, the White House press office was readying a press release that would surprise many for the number of Democrats and other non-supporters of President Nixon that were to be listed—not the so-called Enemy's List, but actually a designation to public service.

The weeks before had been trying for the applicants, many of whom had written letters, sent resumes, asked political contacts for a personal boost, responded to background checks that were initiated by government staff, followed up by security agencies interested in potential skeletons that could prove embarrassing to the White House if found in a presidential appointee.

The weeks before had been trying for the applicants, many of whom had written letters, sent resumes, asked political contacts for a personal boost, responded to background checks that were initiated by government staff, followed up by security agencies interested in potential skeletons that could prove embarrassing to the White House if found in a presidential appointee.

First inklings of what was to transpire probably came to most individuals in the form of a telephone call on Friday, Feb. 8 from Washington, asking if the prospect could be available for official travel the following week on Tuesday. Arrangements were strictly on your own, as were virtually all of the associated expenses in traveling to Philadelphia.

What this preparation was for was the Trial of the Pyx, the annual Assay Commission, a tradition stretching back to 1792, and at that time, the oldest continually operating commission in the United States government. First of the commissions, which were mandated by the original Coinage Act of April 2, 1792 were deemed so essential to the confidence of the public in the national money that section 18 of the legislation directed that the original inspectors were to include the Chief Justice of the United States, the Secretary and Comptroller of the Currency, the Secretary of the Department of State, and the Attorney General of the United States.

This was neither a casual request nor one that was considered so unimportant an aide could attend. The statute is explicit: this who's who "are hereby required to attend for that purpose", meaning that in July of 1795, chief justice John Jay, Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Attorney General William Bradford may have gathered. In the Jefferson Administration, consider this remarkable group: Chief Justice John Marshall; Secretary of State (and future president) James Madison; Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, Attorney General Caesar Rodney might all have been there.

By 1801, the statute had been amended to add the United States District Judge for