

those areas of the country that can provide the necessary infrastructure to host them. We must make a strong federal commitment to support the deployment of advanced telecommunications services. Only with adequate support will we be able to stimulate facility investment necessary to deploy advanced services throughout rural areas. We must not let the digital divide isolate our rural communities.

I look forward to working with Representative STUPAK and my other colleagues to help pass this legislation.

HONORING EDWARD R. CASSANO

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant Commander Edward R. Cassano, who has served as Manager of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary for the last four years.

Ed will be stepping down from his post at the Sanctuary next week, but he will not be leaving his passion for the ocean. Ed will assume the role of Executive Director at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum.

Ed's commitment to our oceans and coastal resources is second to none. Throughout his tenure as Sanctuary Manager, Ed has led efforts to broaden the role and increase awareness of the National Marine Sanctuary Program and it is for this reason that I have been proud to support our Sanctuary Program here in the House.

One of the things Ed is best known for is his ability to bring people together and create partnerships. For example: the Marine Educators' Regional Alliance represents over 30 organizations concerned with marine education; the Research Activity Panel representing over 25 marine institutions that join together to identify research needs in the Sanctuary; and the Sanctuary Advisory Council which brings together community organization and local, state, and Federal agencies to ensure public input for the Sanctuary Program. All of these were formed under Ed's leadership.

Mr. Speaker, last month the California Coastal Commission passed a Resolution honoring Ed for his dedication and outstanding contribution to the State of California and the National Marine Sanctuary Program. This Resolution states that Ed's work is a proud legacy that has significantly improved the quality of life for the people of California and the Nation. I couldn't agree more and I am truly honored to be Ed's Representative in Congress, and more importantly, his friend. I know that his leadership on marine and coastal issues will continue.

THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, next month, I will have the privilege of visiting the Republic

of Kazakhstan to witness firsthand this vigorous young nation's emergence, under the leadership of its President Nursultan Nazarbayev, as a bastion of democracy and free market economy in Central Asia. I am entering into the RECORD three articles written last week by Scott Hogenson, Executive Editor of the Conservative News Service (CNS), who just returned from Kazakhstan. Mr. Hogenson spent time in Kazakhstan reporting on that nation's rich ethnic and cultural diversity, its free media, and its strategic importance to the United States.

At a time when we are paying upwards of \$2.00 for a gallon of gasoline, Kazakhstan is a viable source of hope for us. This non-OPEC member is rapidly developing its enormous oil and natural gas reserves with the help of Mobil, Chevron, and other U.S. corporations. As reported by Mr. Hogenson, Kazakhstan is a ally of the U.S. and a secular Moslem nation that has befriended Israel and stood up against Islamist terrorists.

Please take the time to read these fascinating articles and join me in saluting Kazakhstan's struggle to right itself after 70 years of brutal Soviet repression.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY REFLECTS GAINS IN
KAZAKHSTANI DEMOCRACY

(By Scott Hogenson)

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN (CNSNews.com).—Ivan Bernardovich Zinkevich describes Kazakhstan's transformation from communism to democracy as one that resulted in his Polish heritage being "reborn."

The re-birth of ethnic and cultural identity among Kazakhstan's minority populations was demonstrated in no small part Sunday afternoon when a crowd of about 100 ethnic Poles rose to their feet as a nine-member youth choir sang the Polish national anthem during a cultural celebration in Almaty, an act that would have been considered criminal a few decades ago.

Zinkevich, the 60-year old chairman of Almaty's Polish Cultural Center, called this and other public displays of cultural heritage a "very significant" freedom for Kazakhstanis, who have been laboring to make democracy work since the nation declared its independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991.

While the vast majority of Kazakhstan's 15.6 million residents are either Kazakh or Russian, people representing more than 100 other ethnic groups also live in this sparsely populated central Asian nation whose geography makes it the ninth largest country on Earth.

But Zinkevich made it clear that he and the estimated 47,000 ethnic Poles living here do not want to be separate from the rest of the nation. Speaking through a translator, Zinkevich said Poles "want to be Kazakhstanis but also want ethnic identity," within Kazakhstan.

Born in Kazakhstan in 1940, Zinkevich is the son of Polish parents who, like millions of other non-Russians, were deported to this region of the former USSR in 1936 under the dictatorship of Joseph Stalin. More than half a century later, the mass deportation of people to Kazakhstan has resulted in a population that is among the most diverse in the world.

While many of the new nations created from the demise of the Soviet Union have struggled with varying degrees of ethnic strife, Zinkevich said there are "no conflicts," among Kazakhstan's ethnic peo-

ples, a view shared by the leader of the country's National Democratic Party.

Hasen Kozha-Ahmet, who heads one of the numerous opposition parties to President Nursultan Nazarbayev, described the country's indigenous Kazakh population as "very tolerant," though he said through a translator that there is a "distrust of some ethnic Russians among some of the nation's Kazakhs, who comprise roughly 52 percent of Kazakhstan's citizens. Russians are the second largest ethnic group in the country, representing about 31 percent of the population.

A staunch Kazakh nationalist and anti-Communist, Kozha-Ahmet attributed some of the distrust he described to "the humiliation of the Kazakh people," under Soviet rule. But Kozha-Ahmet said he is generally pleased and optimistic about continued harmony between the many ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan.

Although general tolerance among the various peoples plays a large part in keeping Kazakhstan essentially free of ethnic strife, the growth of free-market economies also plays a part in maintaining social and political stability.

Sergy A. Tereschenko, chairman of the majority Otan Party that supports Nazarbayev's administration, said continued emphasis on economic reforms and creating stronger markets are not only key elements of the party's platform, but also represent "the most difficult issue," for his party and the nation.

"If a majority (of citizens) does not have work, they express dissatisfaction," said Tereschenko, a former communist who assumed leadership of the Otan Party after serving as Nazarbayev's first prime minister.

Speaking through a translator, Tereschenko likened the "establishment of a middle-class," in Kazakhstan to the Biblical account of the Jews' 40-year sojourn through the desert.

"It is very difficult to show benefits to capitalism," said Tereschenko, an agricultural businessman who said he repudiated the economic precepts of communism after studying and learning the business structures of the United States and other democracies during the course of his travels abroad.

The economic challenges facing the people of Kazakhstan and their associated political challenges for the Otan Party are not small. With a population that is shrinking due to emigration by some from Kazakhstan and the continuing recovery from the nation's economic contraction following its independence from the old USSR, Tereschenko emphasized the importance of writing legislation and policies "that are clear to the people."

"To accept law is one thing. To explain it is another," said Tereschenko, who added that a primary need for the Otan Party is to "prove the value (of democracy) by demonstration." The Otan Party holds 32 seats in the 77-member Majilis, or lower chamber of Kazakhstan's Parliament. By comparison, Kazakhstan's Communist Party holds four seats in the Majilis.

In attempting to overcome the difficulties of throwing off communism and introducing the relatively unknown precepts of free-market economic policies to a people who have enjoyed little freedom for the past two centuries, Nazarbayev had issued a sweeping package of proposed long-term reforms known as the "Kazakhstan 2030" plan.

Nazarbayev's proposals address a wide range of needs and goals for the nation, covering national security and domestic stability, management of the country's large oil