

REFORM IN IRAN

HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Secretary Madeleine K. Albright for articulating the United States' willingness to engage Iran after Majlis (parliamentary) victories for Iranian reformers. Her effort to expand cultural and economic ties with Iran is wise and appropriate. While I do not condone the egregious violations of human rights and international law that routinely take place in Iran, we must make it clear to reformers there that the U.S. is eager to reciprocate moves toward a friendlier relationship.

Through the election of Mohammad Khatemi and his pro-reform allies in the Iranian parliament, the Iranian people have expressed a desire to moderate their nation's conservative Islamic government. Ali Khamene'i and Iran's other religious leaders, who hold ultimate control over virtually all Iranian policy, have, for the most part, allowed Iran's new elected leadership to take their places in the Majlis. However, the Washington Post recently reported that the Council of Guardians has overturned several electoral victories for reformers at the provincial level, in addition to manipulating Iran's electoral institutions to favor conservatives in parliamentary runoffs. I believe that while the electoral victories represent an important victory for democracy in Iran, the tenuousness of those victories highlights the degree to which Iran's major institutions are still controlled by a handful of oligarchs. There is much work to be done on these issues.

I would also like to recognize the work of Iranian-American citizens who have worked hard to open up economic ties between the U.S. and Iran. I hope that the lifting of luxury imports and increase in travel visas that Secretary Albright announced in her speech will create some improvement in the quality of life for ordinary Iranians. Further, I hope that improvements in Iran's economy will amplify the cries for democracy.

Once again, I want to reiterate my support for Secretary Albright's attempt to engage and bolster Iranian reformers.

TRIBUTE TO LOUIS W. FOX ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL, RECIPIENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL AWARD

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I offer my sincerest congratulations to Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School in San Antonio, TX, upon the notification of their receipt of the Blue Ribbon School Award.

Schools are awarded the Blue Ribbon School Award based on their performance in regards to several criteria, including: student

focus and support; active teaching and learning; school organization and culture; challenging standard and curriculum; professional community; leadership and educational vitality; school, family, and community partnerships; and indicators of success.

Fox Tech High School is among eight schools in San Antonio and 198 schools nationally, all of which excelled in these areas and were rewarded with the Blue Ribbon School Award from the United States Department of Education.

To receive consideration for this prestigious award, schools must be recommended for national recognition by their individual state department of education or sponsoring agency. Nominations are then evaluated by a National Review Panel including the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Council for America Private Education and a select group of educators from around the country. The Secretary of Education then makes a final determination based on the recommendations of this panel.

In receiving this special recognition, I believe that Fox Tech High School will inspire others to provide the level of quality education that this Blue Ribbon School Award merits. I am proud to represent a district and hail from a state that has clearly placed an emphasis on the education of our children.

THE HONORABLE GARY MCPHERSON

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this moment to recognize the career of one of Colorado's leading statesmen, Colorado Representative, Gary McPherson. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for so many years, has exemplified the notion of public service and civic duty. It is clear that Representative McPherson's dynamic leadership will be greatly missed and difficult to replace.

Elected to the State House of Representatives in 1992, he served on the Appropriations and Judiciary Committees. He dealt with legislation regarding minors and smoking. He has also worked very aggressively on education, crime and welfare reform. Gary was also the vice chairman and the board member of the Arapahoe County Recreation District.

Representative McPherson received many honors. He was named CACI Legislator of the Year and received the Aurora Public Schools' Superintendents' award.

2000 marked the end of Representative McPherson's tenure in the State House of Representatives. His career embodied the citizen-legislator ideal and was a model that every official in elected office should seek to emulate. The citizens of Colorado owe Representative McPherson a debt of gratitude and I wish him well.

REMARKS OF AMBASSADOR DAVID IVRY AT THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE COMMEMORATION

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, May 4, Members of Congress joined with representatives of the diplomatic corps, executive and judicial branch officials and hundreds of Holocaust survivors and their families to commemorate the Days of Remembrance in the rotunda of the United States Capitol. The theme of this year's commemoration was "The Holocaust and the New Century: The Imperative to Remember."

After more than half a century, Mr. Speaker, we must still commemorate the horrors of the Holocaust in order to honor the memory of those victims of Hitler's twisted tyranny. At the same time, we must mark this catastrophe because mankind still has not learned the lessons of this horror, as evidenced most recently by the mass killings in Kosovo.

Mr. Speaker, David Ivry, Israeli Ambassador to the United States delivered a moving address at this year's Day of Remembrance ceremony. I ask that Ambassador Ivry's remarks at the Days of Remembrance ceremony in the Capitol be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give them thoughtful consideration.

David Ivry was appointed Israeli Ambassador to the United States in January 2000. From 1977 to 1982, he held the rank of Major General and Commander of the Israel Air Force. Ambassador Ivry is a graduate of Technion University, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He has held many governmental posts, most recently serving as Israel's National Security Advisor and Head of the National Security Council. He and his wife Ofra have three children and two grandchildren.

REMARKS OF DAVID IVRY, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES

His Excellency, Goran Persson Prime, Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Chairman, honored Members of Congress, diplomatic colleagues and friends: "Yizkor—remember." The act of remembering has always been a basic principle for the Jewish people. In order to remember, the Jewish people have a traditional prayer called the Yizkor, which is recited around the world today. The word Yizkor is in the future tense. It teaches us that the act of remembering the past goes beyond the present and pushes humankind into the future.

My father left Czechoslovakia when Hitler came to power. He reached Israel in 1934 and that is where I was born. Our house contains an album with photos of many members of my family who perished in the Shoah. Few understood the danger. Few believed that such a tragedy could take place. Few imagined that the human mind could conceive such a twisted path. Even today it is difficult to understand. There were brave individuals who provided shelter to Jews. My father's sister was given shelter and hidden by a Christian family in Bratislava, and at the end of the war she made Aliya to Israel. We must also remember those who extended a hand while endangering themselves.

Ladies and gentlemen, in my career as an Air Force pilot, I was given the privilege to view the world from thirty thousand feet and above. From that altitude, armed with the responsibility and collective memory of our people's history, one can see the past, present and future. We were given the opportunity to engage and destroy the immediate threats that faced the Jewish nation. And we committed ourselves to diminish the threats to future generations.

However, the dangers to humanity are not always military in nature. They are also found in the realm of ideas: in the promotion of evil, in the active denial of evil, or even in the refusal to see evil. The United States played an important role in the founding of the State of Israel, as a shelter for the Jewish people. The commandment "To Remember" is also a commandment to remember the positive, and so we will. The Jewish People remember the American role. The Jewish People see the United States as a symbol and example of moral principle and justice. We pray that this superpower will continue to lead the world so that tragedies such as the Shoah will never be repeated in the 21st century.

COMBATING FRAUD AND ABUSE IN THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to combat fraud and abuse in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Since 1975, when the Child and Adult Care Food Program became a separate program under the National School Lunch Act, it has provided nutritious meals and snacks to children in day care facilities and family day care homes. It operates in 37,000 day care centers and 175,000 day care homes.

Unfortunately, in recent years there have been reports of widespread fraud and abuse and deficient management practices in the program. This has meant that the full value of nutrition benefits the program delivers has been denied to many participating children. Sadly, funds that could be better used to serve children have ended up in the hands of unscrupulous program sponsors and care providers.

Hopefully, this bill puts an end to this practice. We owe it to the approximately 2.7 million children participating in this program to end the fraud, abuse, and mismanagement that is depriving them of the nutritious meals.

In August, 1999, the Office of the Inspector General (IG) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a report outlining fraud and abuse in the Child and Adult Care Food program. This report, "Presidential Initiative: Operation Kiddie Care," found that the program was highly vulnerable to abuse because most of the controls for combating fraud were vested in CACFP sponsors without any federal or state oversight. The IG found that some sponsors were using program funds for personal use and depleting the funds available to provide an effective food service program to children in day care.

Three months later (November, 1999) the General Accounting Office (GAO) issued their report, entitled, "Food Assistance: Efforts to Control Fraud and Abuse in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Should Be Strengthened." The GAO report found that the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) had not effectively directed the states' efforts to protect against fraud and abuse. According to the GAO, state agencies claimed that a lack of resources, inadequate training in the identification of fraud and abuse, and unclear regulations on the removal of noncompliant sponsors were among the reasons why they could not strengthen the amount of control over the fraud and abuse.

To address the issues raised in these two reports, I have worked with the Early Childhood, Youth, and Families Subcommittee Chairman, Congressman MIKE CASTLE, and his Ranking Member, Congressman DALE KILDEE, the nutrition community, and the Department of Agriculture to develop a proposal that will address many of the concerns raised by the IG, the GAO, and the nutrition community. The legislation outlined below will go a long way toward ending fraud and abuse in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Key provisions of this proposal would:

Require USDA to develop a plan for ongoing periodic training of state and sponsor staff on the identification of fraud and abuse in order to ensure that current and new employees can assist in efforts to prevent fraud and abuse.

Require a minimum number of unannounced and scheduled site visits. These visits would be in addition to site visits to program sponsors and providers with a bad record or where there is a suspicion of fraud and abuse.

Permit the secretary to withhold, in whole or in part, state administrative funds in instances where states have not met their responsibilities for oversight and training for sponsors and providers.

Provide notification to parents that their children are enrolled in a child care center or group or family day care home participating in the CACFP Program. This provision will allow parents to take action if they suspect fraud and abuse and to understand the benefits their children should receive under CACFP.

Bar the recovery of funds lost due to fraud and abuse from food dollars which benefit participating children.

Make it clear that sponsors applying for participation in CACFP must meet specific qualifications and will not automatically approved. Require the development of detailed criteria for approving new sponsors and for renewing sponsors which would include factors such as whether or not they are capable of performing the job, have appropriate business experience and adequate management plans, and whether or not there is a need for an additional sponsor in a specific area.

Limit administrative costs for sponsors of day care centers to 15 percent of the funds they disburse to decrease the potential for abuse.

Require USDA, working with states and sponsors, to develop a list of allowable administrative costs for sponsors of family day care homes and child care centers.

Require the Department of Agriculture to establish minimum standards regarding the num-

ber of monitors sponsors should employ to ensure there are sufficient monitors to visit providers and detect fraud and abuse.

Require state agencies that administer CACFP to deny approval of institutions determined to have been terminated with cause or that lost their license to operate any federally funded program.

Limit the ability of day care homes to change sponsoring organizations to once a year unless they can demonstrate they are transferring for good cause.

Require the return and reallocation of non-obligatory CACFP audit funds to the secretary for reallocation to other states with a demonstrated need for additional audit dollars.

Require sponsors to have in effect a policy that restricts other employment by employees that interferes with their responsibilities and duties with respect to CACFP.

Require the secretary to develop procedures for terminating sponsors for unlawful conduct and failure to meet their agreements with the state.

Provide for the immediate suspension of sponsors and providers in cases where there is a health or safety threat to participating children.

Finally, it appears that this bill will result in a small amount of savings in mandatory spending. It is my intention to work closely with Congressman KILDEE and others to ensure that these resources are used in a responsible way. In particular, we should explore ways to use these savings to improve the health and maintenance of those served by federal nutrition programs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman CASTLE, Congressman KILDEE, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the nutrition community for working with me to develop this proposal. We created the Child and Adult Care Food Program to benefit children, not line the pockets of unprincipled sponsors and providers. I believe the bill we are introducing today will ensure that the program works the way it was originally intended. Most importantly, it will give the states and the Department of Agriculture the tools they need to attain the goals set for the program. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation to put an end to the waste, fraud, and abuse that has plagued this program.

THE RETIREMENT OF WAYNE SHACKELFORD, COMMISSIONER, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Wayne Shackelford, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Transportation, for the dedication and commitment he has made to the people of Georgia, and to congratulate him on his retirement.

Mr. Shackelford became Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation on November 1, 1991. He has been active in both regional and national transportation policy