

can use more outstanding companies such as Stiles Corp. I ask the House to Join me in paying tribute to a great businessman.

IN HONOR OF THE ELIZABETH WATERFRONT FESTIVAL

HON. ROBERT MENEDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. MENEDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Elizabeth Waterfront Festival, an annual event celebrating the diversity of this great country by bringing together Hispanic families from Cuba, Colombia, Honduras, Peru, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, and Mexico.

The festival will take place in Elizabeth, New Jersey on May 27, 28, and 29. The expected 450,000 visitors to the festival will enjoy three days of games, rides, crafts, and traditional Latin music and food.

The Waterfront Festival celebrates the history, culture, and arts of the area's Hispanic community, while also providing access to some of Elizabeth's fine resources. The waterfront is an exceptional feature of the city and a perfect place to hold a festival honoring Hispanic heritage.

In addition to celebrating the heritage of other nations, this festival celebrates America's heritage by acknowledging the contributions that made our country great—we are a nation of nations, and this festival is a fine example of why America's collective soul lives on in prosperous fashion—with this celebration, we honor our past and embrace our future.

This celebration would not have been possible without the sponsorship and support of the City of Elizabeth, Melly Mell Productions, Inc., and the Elizabeth Cubanos Lions Club. For their kind support, I extend my sincerest gratitude.

I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring this wonderful festival, and ask that we honor America's rich diversity.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY RECOGNIZES HELEN AND ALBERT LEVINSON

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Helen and Albert Levinson of Monroe Township, who will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary this Friday. Together they have served on a wide variety of committees, held countless leadership positions in the community, and tirelessly advocated the importance of public service and "giving back" to the community.

Both Helen and Albert Levinson were born in the United States. Both of their fathers emigrated from Eastern Europe, while their mothers were born in the United States. They met in Newark, NJ, and were married in 1940. Al-

bert served his country during World War II by working in the Newark Shipyards. After the war, he opened Levinson's Furniture in Newark, and in 1968 entered a real estate business specializing in commercial real estate. Albert concluded his real estate career by joining forces with his two sons, Robert and Marc, in the form of Levinson Associates. Helen received a degree in teaching from Newark State Teachers College, and began teaching primary school while raising her two young boys. She eventually embarked on a new career in social services, specializing in pediatric casework.

Albert and Helen moved to the Clearbrook Adult Community in Monroe Township in 1973, and Albert served as president of that community for 3 consecutive years. He was then asked to join the Township Council and was elected for a 4-year term. Today, both Albert and Helen remain active in their communities. At 83 years of age, Albert still comes to work daily, and is a commissioner of the Monroe Township Municipal Utility Authority.

Albert and Helen have willingly given themselves to the community. As they plan to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary tomorrow, I urge my fellow representatives to join me in recognizing this exceptional couple.

CONTRIBUTION OF SULTAN QABOOS OF OMAN TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS COUNTRY AND TO U.S.-OMANI RELATIONS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, without doubt, the most distinctive feature of my office in the Rayburn House Office Building is a model ship. This is not just any model of a ship, it dominates my office—the ship fills one entire wall of the office standing nine feet tall and stretching about 12 feet long. This ship model, Mr. Speaker, is an accurate scale model of the ship *Sultanah*, a vessel built in Oman in the last century. The model was constructed from the original blueprints for the ship which are still in the hands of the Omani government. The *Sultanah* has great importance for United States relations with Oman because this ship brought the first Arab ambassador to the United States in 1840. In fact, Mr. Speaker, April 13 of this year was the 160th anniversary of the arrival of the *Sultanah* in New York harbor.

This ship is not only an important symbol of U.S.-Omani relations, but it is important for U.S. relations with the entire Arab world. This model ship was given to the United States Congress by the government of Oman in 1995 when I hosted an exhibit of Omani culture and history in the Rotunda of the Cannon House Office Building to mark the 25th anniversary of the ascension to the throne of Oman of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Sid Al-Said. The model of the *Sultanah* is temporarily in my office, Mr. Speaker.

I mention this model of the *Sultanah*, Mr. Speaker, as an introduction to remarks I wish to make today in paying tribute to His Majesty

Sultan Qaboos of Oman. First, I want to call to the attention of my colleagues the singular honor recently bestowed on His Majesty. Georgetown University presented the 25th Anniversary Founders Award of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies to Sultan Qaboos in recognition of his important contribution to the establishment of the Center. In 1975, when the Center was established, the Sultan made one of the first grants to permit its establishment. Five years later, he endowed the Sultanate of Oman Chair in Arabic and Islamic Literature, and in 1993 he made a further endowment by establishing a scholarship fund for the Department of Arabic at the university.

This is only the latest recognition of the Sultan's role in improving relations between Oman and the United States and between the Arab world and the United States. His commitment to better ties between our two countries has been an important element in the friendship that marks our relationship with Oman.

Mr. Speaker, the second reason I call the attention of my colleagues to the activities and role of Sultan Qaboos is that this year marks the 30th anniversary of his assumption of power on July 24, 1970. When he became the new leader of Oman, he was confronted with insurgency in a country plagued by endemic disease, illiteracy, and poverty. One of the new sultan's first measures was to abolish many of his father's harsh restrictions, which had caused thousands of Omanis to leave the country. He offered amnesty to opponents of the previous regime, and many of them returned to Oman and have played critical roles in the economic, political, and cultural development of the country.

Sultan Qaboos established a modern government structure, launched a major development program to upgrade educational and health facilities, built a modern infrastructure of roads, airports, and public utilities, and began the development of the country's resources. The results of this effort have been dramatic. The number of schools rose from three in 1970 to more than 840 by 1993, while hospital and clinic beds increased during this period from 12 to 4,355. There have been further substantial increases in quantity and quality of public services since that time.

Under the leadership of Sultan Qaboos, Oman has pursued a foreign policy that has contributed to stability and moderation in that important part of the world. The relationship between the United States and Oman has been cordial and cooperative. In an important indicator of the warmth and importance of our relationship with Oman, President Clinton stopped in Oman on his return from India earlier this year and held important discussions with Sultan Qaboos. Agreements on security and economic cooperation between the United States and Oman have established a firm and secure basis for our relationship.

Oman has also played a positive role in encouraging peace and reconciliation in the Middle East. It supported the Camp David accords and was one of only three Arab League states that did not break relations with Egypt after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty in 1979. Not long after the signature of the Oslo Accords, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres were invited to visit Oman, and the