

dedication to Israel brought us hope, whose efforts for peace renewed our vision of the future, and whose legacy will be remembered for generations to come.

Yitzhak and Leah Rabin are no longer with us, but their memories are inscribed on the stones of history. Sustained in our hearts and minds forever. Leah was a supportive wife, a devoted mother, and a pillar of strength to those who knew her. Yitzhak was a man of integrity and vision. An honorable soldier whose greatest mission was his battle for peace.

I first met Yitzhak in 1959. I was a young captain, and he, the Deputy Chief of General Staff, a respected leader and a critical asset to the IDF. Our paths frequently crossed again over the years until the day he approached me and requested that I return to the Ministry of Defense.

I knew him in times of crisis and success. I found him to be a sensitive man, emotional to the point of tears at the loss of life; a leader who was not only attentive but knew how to listen. He had a piercing analytical understanding of the issues. He was a man who saw the minute details, without losing sight of the larger picture. Yitzhak Rabin—the man of security, who fought in battles and wars, Chief of Staff of IDF during the Six-Day War.

As we mourn the loss of our fallen hero, we must remember, he dedicated his career to national defense, and his life to Israel's future. In fact, at the time of his assassination, Rabin served not only as Prime Minister, but also as the Minister of Defense. In 1986, I served as Director General of the Ministry of Defense, as per Rabin's request. I held this office for nearly ten years. Basically, because Rabin would not let me leave.

At our weekly meeting on Friday, November third, nineteen ninety-five, I raised the issue of my resignation. I had served an unprecedented number of years as Director General, and I felt it was time to move on. Rabin understood my reasoning, but requested that I stay in that post. After deliberation, we decided to discuss this and other pending issues at our next meeting on Sunday, November fifth. Of course, that conversation never took place. With just three shots from an assassin, Yitzhak's potential as a leader was brought to an end. His life was cut short, and the future of the Middle East would never be the same again.

Though his dreams have not become a reality, Rabin's vision for the future lives on. It is kept alive in the heart of each Israeli citizen and soldier who wishes to live in a land of security and peace. Over the past year, this dream has been marred by tragedy, sorrow, and pain. But amidst the broken pieces, the Israeli people have emerged united. Bonded by a unique determination and resolve. This resolve has been strengthened by the abiding relationship of Israel and the United States. For over half a century, we have stood together as true partners and friends.

As a diplomat, general, and statesman, Yitzhak Rabin appreciated the unwavering support of the United States, its vital role in peace negotiations, and our joint efforts to maintain stability in the Middle East. Although regional stability has been shaken, the ties that bind us remain strong. As our two nations mourn the tragedy of September eleventh it is clear—the United States and Israel are forever partners in the pursuit of security and peace.

This is just one element of the legacy left behind by Yitzhak Rabin. Though his leadership has come to an end, his message still re-

mains. Today, we remember that peace is not just a dream. It is essential to our future, and the future of generations to come. Shalom haverim.

Shalom friends. May the memory of Yitzhak and Leah be with us forever.

PLIGHT OF AFGHAN WOMEN

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 31, 2001

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues to condemn the oppressive rule enforced by the Taliban regime against women. I thank Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, co-chair of Women's Caucus, for her leadership in bringing this issue to the attention of all members of Congress. Ms. Millender-McDonald has been a long time advocate for the equal and fair treatment of women both here in the United States and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, the Taliban are a repressive and regressive force in Afghan society. They rule their country in complete defiance of the 1977 Afghanistan constitution—denying both men and women the equal rights this document specifically grants them. Under the Taliban regime, women, in particular, suffer extreme oppression.

They are isolated in their homes and barred from going to school, working, or even walking outside unaccompanied. They are required by the Taliban never to enter public places without being completely covered. The windows on their houses are also covered or painted so no one may see them. They live their lives in semi-darkness; faceless and powerless. Those who violate the rules of conduct are beaten or brutalized by roving bands of Taliban police.

This oppression of Afghan women not only compromises their value as human beings, but undermines Afghan society by denying it the talents and contributions of its women. In fact, prior to Taliban rule Afghan women were counted amongst the country's leading doctors, lawyers, teachers and political leaders. The contributions they made to their communities were invaluable.

In addition, as the primary caregivers in families Afghan women are responsible for instilling values and a sense of right and wrong in their children. By demeaning women, the Taliban regime is indoctrinating new generations of children, boys and girls alike with a belief that is counter to a set of values that we all hold dear. It is important for Afghan mothers and grandmothers to provide inspiration and hope for a better quality of life to their children, and that begins with their own fair and just treatment. If not, what message are these children being sent when their government demeans and represses those who are at the very heart of family life? What vision for the future can we offer these innocent children?

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that if we want to build a world where freedom, democracy, and equality are respected tenets, then women have to be equal partners with men in all aspects of life. Women all over the world, including Afghanistan, value the opportunity to con-

tribute their special talents and ideas with their communities. Therefore, we should join them as allies in their struggle for a social climate where equality for both Muslim men and Muslim women is respected.

Finally, I want to clearly state that the blame for the continued discrimination Afghan women face is not in Islam, but on the non-Islamic nature of the Taliban regime. Progressive based Islamic traditions have been tossed aside by the Taliban government and replaced with an extremism that is a distortion of true Islam.

The United States Congress must condemn the treatment of women in Afghanistan in the name of justice, peace, equality and freedom. It has been too long since Afghan women have enjoyed the rights common in so many other areas of the world. Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan will contribute to establishing a stable and progressive Islamic regime that values women and permits them to contribute positively and equally to a better tomorrow for the citizens of Afghanistan and future generations.

TREATMENT OF AFGHAN WOMEN

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 31, 2001

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very urgent issue of the treatment of the women in Afghanistan.

Yesterday, on Good Morning America, several video clips flashed across the television secretly depicting the horrific and brutal treatment of women in Afghanistan.

The first clip showed a woman leaving her home dressed in her full burqa, but missing the shroud that covers her face. A man who obviously was not her husband or even relative proceeded to beat her. What was even more shocking was that passersby were not affected by the scene. Such occurrences have become part of their everyday lives. Incredibly, the beating of women for 'disciplinary' as well as entertainment reasons is a routine phenomenon in Afghanistan under the Taliban, an extremist Islamic sect.

The second clip showed the Taliban executing a woman accused of killing her abusive husband. Although the husband's family forgave the woman because she bore his seven children, a Taliban fighter was still ordered to shoot her in the back of her head with an automatic rifle because she was "too guilty to be forgiven."

How can we allow this type of treatment of women to continue?

With the coming to power of Islamic fundamentalists, women's right to fully participate in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the country was drastically curtailed and later on abruptly denied them by the Taliban.

Women are totally deprived of the right to education, of the right to work, of the right to travel, of the right to health care, of the right to legal recourse, of the right to recreation, and of the right to being human.

Some of the heinous restrictions imposed by the Taliban on women in Afghanistan include: