

A TRIBUTE TO JOE FRANCIS

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Joseph S. Francis, a man named by the San Diego Business Journal as "San Diego's Top Labor Leader". On March 2, 2001, Joe is retiring from the position of Executive Director of Labor's Community Service Agency, an agency he founded in 1985.

Labor's Community Service Agency is a non-profit organization, committed to serving workers, their families and the larger community. It develops partnerships with government, business, and labor—so these sectors can cooperate in making our city a better place to work and live. As Executive Director of Labor's Community Service Agency, Joe has developed many programs that address the needs of workers in San Diego.

He is also currently the editor of the Messenger, Vice President of Job Training Associates, Board Member of the San Diego Carrier Museum, and a member of the San Diego County Board of Economic Advisors. His past positions include Executive Secretary of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council and Director of the Committee on Political Education (COPE). Joe was honored with a Distinguished Service Award by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council in 1996.

Raised in New Bedford, MA, Joe moved to San Diego in 1953. He first worked at Convoir, followed by the San Diego Fire Department where he was involved in the local Firefighters Union. He was elected director of the Union Board in 1965—and later served as Secretary and then President of Local 145. In 1980, he was elected Executive-Director of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council with an overwhelming two-thirds of the vote.

Although organizing workers is his primary focus, Joe has also contributed to the community through his service on the Boards of the following organizations: United Way, the San Diego Technology Council, the Salvation Army, the Regional Employment Training Consortium, and as President of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation.

On the occasion of Joe's retirement from service as Executive Director of Labor's Community Service Agency, I want to sincerely thank him for his far-reaching vision, his relentless passion, and his tireless service to the working men and women in San Diego and throughout the nation.

Joe, you serve as a model of dedication and energy which we will follow as we strive to carry on the work that you have begun.

CASARELLA RETIRES AFTER 37 YEARS IN EDUCATION

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Joe Casarella, who has re-

tired after 37 years in education, culminating in four years as superintendent of the Wyoming Area School District in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Raised in Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Joe worked and lived in New York, then in Berwick, Pennsylvania, finally returning home to lead the Wyoming Area schools. He has a long and distinguished career that includes service as a teacher, elementary school principal, junior high school principal, curriculum director, director of special education and federal funds, and as an assistant superintendent.

Mr. Speaker, it is a tribute to just how well liked Joe is at Wyoming Area and the job he has done that when he submitted a letter of resignation last year, students and teachers alike urged him to stay. The one word heard again and again from those who know him is "gentleman."

His accomplishments include successful staff contract negotiations and increasing access to technology for students and teachers, but his most prized accomplishment is the district's community program. In this initiative, representatives from Luzerne County Human Resources and Catholic Social Services work with administrators, teachers and students to identify at-risk students and families and connect them with the social services they need to help them succeed. About 30 families have been helped.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call Joe Casarella's long service to the attention of the House of Representatives, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF FELIPE REINOSO, HONOREE OF NOSOTROS MAGAZINE'S 33RD ANNIVERSARY GALA AWARD BANQUET

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Felipe Reinoso, who will be honored at the 33rd Anniversary Gala Award Banquet of Nosotros Magazine on Saturday, February 21, 2001. The Banquet is an annual event that honors distinguished Hispanic leaders for their important contributions to society. This is an opportune time for today's Hispanic leaders to reflect on the economic, political, and cultural contributions that Hispanics have made to American society.

In 1984, Felipe Reinoso received his Bachelor's Degree in Spanish Education from Sacred Heart University and his Master's Degree in Bilingual Special Education from Fairfield University in 1987. Before co-founding the Bridge Academy High School in 1998, where he was Principal, he taught bilingual Social Studies at Warren Harding High School for 14 years.

For his excellence in bilingual education, Mr. Reinoso has received numerous awards and honors, including a citation from the Connecticut General Assembly for Excelling in Education; Teacher of the Year, Warren Har-

ding H.S.; Connecticut Bilingual Teacher of the Year; an Award for Outstanding Achievement as Bilingual Teacher from Hispanic Society, Inc.; and the National Education Association Human Civil Rights Award. In addition, he has received the Points of Light Foundation President's Service Award from President Clinton.

On November 7, 2000, Felipe Reinoso became the first Peruvian-American in United States history to be elected as a legislator. Today, he proudly represents the 130th District of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Mr. Reinoso's victory resonates with historic significance, and gives a greater voice to the concerns of the Hispanic community.

In honoring Felipe Reinoso, Nosotros Magazine is promoting the most important values in American society today: hard work, dedication, and compassion. Mr. Reinoso embodies these American ideals; and, throughout his career, he has worked tirelessly to provide others with the opportunity to meet the standard of excellence he has set. As an educator, he has worked hard to empower Hispanic Americans, and I am confident that he will continue his valuable service to the Hispanic community as State Representative.

Because of community leaders like Mr. Reinoso, the Hispanic community is not only experiencing economic empowerment, but also political strength. Today, we prepare for a future that reflects our years of hard work, and our commitment to each other.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Felipe Reinoso for his many contributions to the Hispanic community and to the State of Connecticut.

CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, it has been many years since I joined the Peace Corps, and I rise today to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Peace Corps.

It was started on March 1, 1961, when President Kennedy signed the legislation launching the Peace Corps—establishing a bold and hopeful experiment to all Volunteers to bring practical grassroots assistance to the people of developing nations to help them build a better life for themselves and their children.

Forty years later, the Peace Corps has succeeded beyond everyone's expectations.

Today there are more than 162,000 returned volunteers in the United States, six of whom serve in the House of Representatives and two in the United States Senate. They have served in 134 different nations, making significant and lasting contributions from Armenia and Bangladesh to Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

There are more than 7,000 volunteers that are now living and working overseas. They are addressing critical development needs on a person-to-person basis: working with teachers and parents to teach English, math and

science; helping spread and gain access to clear water; to grow more food; to help prevent the spread of AIDS; to help entrepreneurs start new businesses; to train students to use computers; and to work with non-governmental organizations to protect our environment. Above all, Volunteers leave behind skills that allow individuals and communities to take charge of their own futures.

In our increasing interconnected global community, Peace Corps volunteers also promote greater cross-cultural awareness, both in the countries in which they serve and when they return home. As they work shoulder to shoulder with their host communities, Volunteers embody and share some of America's most enduring values; freedom, opportunity, hope, progress. It is these bonds of friendship and understanding that they create and that can build the foundations for peace among nations.

And I can personally testify that the best service that is given to the Peace Corps is the continuation of service to our communities when we all come home. Today, because of the anniversary of the Peace Corps, thousands of returned volunteers are visiting schools and local communities throughout the United States, sharing the knowledge and insights gained from their experiences abroad and passing along the value of service to others.

As we have learned around the world, the best way to support a democracy is to help development at the local level. Meanwhile, America's, young and old, single and married, would like to serve their country, humanity and democracy. The Peace Corps is one of the most effective mechanisms for uniting these two ideals. This is an asset we should not let go to waste.

On this 40th anniversary of the Peace Corps, please join me in honoring all Volunteers, past, present, and future, and in celebrating four decades of service to the world. The Peace Corps has served its country well, and we should all be proud.

HONORING RABBI ISRAEL
ZOBBERMAN

HON. EDWARD SCHROCK
OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. SCHROCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I honor today Rabbi Israel

Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. He is also the President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis, and Chairman of the Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater. I submit the following article that was written by Rabbi Zoberman into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The evolving scenario in the State of Israel, ill-boding to its very security, erupting when Chairman Arafat chose to respond with violence to Prime Minister Barak's far-reaching concessions on the verge of concluding peace, has resurrected fundamental issues of a bitter conflict. Paradoxically, while the sole sovereign Jewish entity is stronger than ever, militarily and economically, it remains vulnerable. The profound division in Israeli society concerning the Peace Process or lack thereof, is a critical factor. In addition, its laudable democracy, the only such progressive manifestation in that part of the world, is a source of vibrant exchange and growth as well as a dangerously fragmented reality.

As a member of a recent JCPA (the Jewish Council for Public Affairs) national solidarity mission to Israel, I was exposed to the unique variety of the Israeli experience unlike no other. What other capital in the world besides Jerusalem is subject to hostile gunfire without a powerful response to attacks on traumatized civilians? Touring the Gilo suburb now famous for drawing gunfire from the neighboring Palestinian village of Beit Jala, we saw the installed protection walls and the encamped unit of Israel Defense Forces which returns fire. Appreciatively greeted in the local elementary school, we learned first-hand of the adverse impact upon young and old. The complex, ironic and surrealistic nature of the situation was highlighted by remarkable Orthodox Adina Shapira, a law student who co-created with a fellow Palestinian a United Nations award-winning project for volunteering Israeli teachers, including herself, to instruct Arab children in the West Bank. All that while her two brothers who are combat soldiers have quite a different perspective. The professional briefing by General Yaalon, IDF's Deputy Chief of Staff, made clear that restraint is exercised in face of planned assault irresponsibly using children as pawns.

In the midst of rising concerns, Israel remains a welcoming home and safe haven for endangered Jews and those yearning for the Jewish context and fulfillment that only Israel can offer. How touching it was in the town of Katzir near the Israeli Arab community of Um-El-Fachem where disturbances occurred, introducing myself to the amazement of a young boy from Kazakhstan, as sharing the same background.

A highlight was the night rally we were fortunate to attend in Ramat Gan for the three kidnapped Israeli soldiers, including Benny Avraham from Pardes Katz, Tidewater's twin city. Ephraim Sneh, Deputy Minister of Defense, addressed the emotionally charged gathering which included the soldiers' families. We urgently continue to call for their release distributing blue ribbons.

In the heated political debate, the message to our delegation by Ariel Sharon, leader of the opposition Likud party, and now Prime Minister-Elect, included empathy for the condition of the Palestinians. I dared ask him if he would have visited the Temple Mount had he known that it would be exploited by the Palestinians. Responding with a wry smile, he retorted, "They always have excuses." What is certain is that we are entering an uncertain period of great risks in which both Sharon and Arafat will be severely tested, affecting their long enduring peoples, the entire region and beyond. There is a dire need to overcome a most dangerous impasse. If Sharon proves to be a faithful disciple of Menachem Begin, another hardliner turned peacemaker, and intransigent Arafat learns from the equally inspiring example of Egypt's President Anwar Sadat's transformation with admittedly facing now a more complex scenario, that would enshrine them too in a history yet to be written.

The heartfelt presentation of the American Ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, focused on the U.S.'s abiding friendship with Israel which facilitates the arduous attempt to bringing closer both sides. While asserting that the warring leaders have a stake in resolution for their own interests, he stated, "violence will not stop altogether in my estimate," with the grave danger of spreading.

Our group's visit to Neve Shalom's unique setting of Jews and Arabs, midway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, reminded us of the possibility and necessity for co-existence in a troubled Middle East. Witnessing the shared kindergarten in which the very young learn about each other's traditions was a moving experience, particularly since I was raised in Israel of the 50's and could not even imagine then this kind of joint endeavor which is still an exception. At this fateful juncture may both sides to the tragic historical conflict allow for an emerging new reality of shalom's essential blessings of life, replacing violence with vision and pain with promise.