

emerged as a worldwide leader and expert in the agricultural, medical, and technological fields. Israel has the ability to forge a unique partnership with Iraq which would greatly benefit from the skills and knowledge of the Israeli workforce. Trade between the two countries would also help Iraq build an economy that is vibrant and independent of the energy sector while helping to foster democracy in the heart of the Middle East. This will never happen, however, unless Iraq moves beyond the draconian rhetoric of the past and recognizes Israel's right to exist.

The resolution I am introducing today calls on the Government of Iraq to recognize Israel's right to exist and establish diplomatic relations with our Middle Eastern friend. My resolution also calls on Iraq and other states to work with Israel and the U.S. in fighting the spread of extremism and terrorism throughout the world. Finally, the resolution urges the Administration to persuade Iraq and other countries to recognize Israel's right to exist.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution which encourages the Government of Iraq to finally recognize our great ally's right to exist. I call on the leadership of the House to support this resolution.

CONGRATULATING JIM FRANCE,  
RECIPIENT OF POCONO RACEWAY'S  
2008 BILL FRANCE AWARD  
OF EXCELLENCE

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 5, 2008*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to James C. France, vice chairman and executive vice president of NASCAR and chairman and CEO of International Speedway Corporation, who was named 2008 recipient of the Pocono Raceway's Bill France Award of Excellence.

This award has been presented annually since 1977 to the person, corporation or organization that has made outstanding contributions to the sport of NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Racing.

The award is dedicated to the inspiration of William H.G. France, founder of NASCAR and the father of this year's recipient.

Jim France grew up in the early years of stock car racing, living and learning every aspect of the sport from his own experience and from his father and brother.

Mr. France joined ISC in 1959, working in all phases of operations. He was elected to the ISC board in 1970 and has served as the company's secretary, assistant treasurer, vice president, chief operating officer and executive vice president before being named the company's president and chief operating officer in 1987. He was also named to the NASCAR board of directors in 2000.

France has been involved in motorsports most of his life. He has been a strong supporter of motorcycle racing in the United States, as evidenced by his professional involvement in the sport. He was active in Leg-

ends car racing and the Allison "Legacy" Car Series. He was BF Goodrich Legends Cars national tour champion in 1992 and had a good deal of success in the Gatorade Florida Legends Series.

He served as starter for the U.S. Motorcycle Grand Prix in the late 1960s, raced dirt track races for nearly five years and has been a member of the American Motorcyclist Association for more than 30 years. In addition, France has raced karts on both dirt and asphalt and he has served as a board member of the Automobile Competition Committee of the United States.

Dr. Joseph Mattioli, chairman and CEO of Pocono International Raceway, has stated that Mr. France was "a driving force behind NASCAR's success . . ." He added that he is proud to announce that Mr. France has been selected as this year's award recipient.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. France on this auspicious occasion. Certainly, his lifelong commitment to the motorsport industry has had a tremendously positive economic impact for thousands of families in this great nation and has created a permanent place of honor for Jim France and the entire France family.

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL  
MARK O'NEILL

**HON. NANCY E. BOYDA**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 5, 2008*

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I hope the House will join with me today to pay tribute to an exceptional General Officer in the United States Army, Brigadier General Mark O'Neill, upon his retirement from active military service.

General O'Neill's distinguished career spans over 30 years of service to our great Nation, culminating as Deputy Commandant of the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. A native of St. Louis, Missouri, he was commissioned as an infantry officer in 1978 after graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He has served in command and staff positions with the 82d Airborne Division, 10th Mountain Division, 25th Infantry Division, and the 3rd Infantry Division. He has commanded tactical units at the platoon, company, battalion and brigade level, and served as the Chief of Staff of the 10th Mountain Division. He has also served as Assistant Army Attaché in the Defense Attaché Office, American Embassy, Beijing, China, and as a strategic analyst on the Army Staff at the Pentagon. In addition to service during Operation Iraqi Freedom, General O'Neill has served during Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

In addition to attendance at numerous U.S. Army and Joint Force tactical courses and schools, General O'Neill is a graduate of the U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer's Course, the Defense Language Institute, and the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, where he earned a Master of Arts degree in

National Security Affairs. He completed advanced Chinese language and area studies while assigned to the U.S. Defense Liaison Office in Hong Kong where he studied at the Beijing University School of Foreign Languages and the British Ministry of Defense Chinese Language School. General O'Neill is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Achievement Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with Star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, four awards of the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Combat Action Badge, Army Staff Identification Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Ranger Tab, and the Expert Infantryman's Badge.

As a Member of Congress, I am extremely fortunate to call Mark a friend. In fact, Mark and I were junior high and high school classmates and we've taken advantage of our existing friendship to foster a strong working relationship. I will miss his candor and his guidance. I ask my colleagues to join me today to thank General O'Neill, his wife Lori, and his entire family for the commitment, sacrifice and contribution that they have made throughout his honorable military career.

TRIBUTE TO THE 51ST ANNUAL  
PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 5, 2008*

Mr. SERRANO. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the 51st Anniversary of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade, which will be held on June 8th, 2008, in New York City. A luminous and star-studded event, this parade proudly recognizes the heritage of Puerto Ricans in the United States, and year after year has proven to be one of our Nation's largest outdoor festivities.

The National Puerto Rican Day Parade is the successor to the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade, which held its inaugural celebration on Sunday, April 12th, 1958, in "El Barrio," Manhattan. The impact of the first Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York was both immediate and resounding. It galvanized thousands of New York Puerto Ricans in a very public, very proud demonstration of their emergence in the City as an important and growing ethnic group. For the next 38 years, the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade grew into a staple of New York's cultural life. In 1995, the overwhelming success of the parade prompted organizers to increase its size and transform it into the national and, indeed, international, affair that it is today.

This magnificent New York institution now includes participation from delegates representing over thirty States, including Alaska