

the Howard County General Hospital, a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine. Many others make the commute to nearby Baltimore, or Washington, DC.

In addition, Howard County's public schools, from kindergarten through community college, are constantly ranked among the best in the State and boast test scores 50 percent above average. Parents know that their children are receiving the best education possible, due to the hard work and dedication of the employees of the Howard County Public School System led by Superintendent Dr. Sydney L. Cousin, who has served the school system for almost 20 years in an exemplary manner.

With its top schools, great jobs, low crime rates, variety of recreational activities, and acres of open space, it is no surprise that Columbia and Ellicott City beat 741 other communities to place fourth on Money Magazine's Best Places to Live 2006 list. I applaud Howard County Executive James N. Robey for his nearly four decades of service to Howard County, as well as the citizens of Columbia and Ellicott City for making this area truly one of the best places to live in America—for it is the people who make our communities great.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the other 2006 Best Places winners, and I remind my colleagues to work with me to ensure that our policies support and facilitate the creation of livable communities for all Americans.

Again, I congratulate Columbia and Ellicott City, located in my district in Howard County, Maryland, on receipt of this prestigious recognition.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution, which I sincerely believe will do more harm than good.

I do agree with the resolution's condemnation of violence. But I am convinced that when we get involved in foreign conflicts and send strong messages, such as this resolution will, it ends up expanding the war rather than diminishing the conflict, and that ultimately comes back to haunt us.

Madam Speaker, I follow a policy in foreign affairs called non-interventionism. I do not believe we are making the United States more secure when we involve ourselves in conflicts overseas. The Constitution really does not authorize us to be the policemen of the world, much less to favor one side over another in foreign conflicts. It is very clear, reading this resolution objectively, that all the terrorists are on one side, and all the victims and the innocents are on the other side. I find this unfair, particularly considering the significantly higher number of civilian casualties among Lebanese civilians. I would rather advocate neutrality rather than picking sides, which is what this resolution does.

Some would say that there is no room to talk about neutrality, as if neutrality were a crime. I would suggest there should be room for an open mind to consider another type of policy that may save American lives.

I was in Congress in the early 1980s when the U.S. Marines were sent into Lebanon, and I came to the Floor before they went, when they went, and before they were killed, arguing my case against getting involved in that conflict.

Ronald Reagan, when he sent the troops in, said he would never turn tail and run. Then, after the Marines were killed, he had a reassessment of the policy. When he wrote his autobiography a few years later after leaving the Presidency, he wrote this:

Perhaps we didn't appreciate fully enough the depth of the hatred and the complexity of the problems that made the Middle East such a jungle. Perhaps the idea of a suicide car bomber committing mass murder to gain instant entry to Paradise was so foreign to our own values and consciousness that it did not create in us the concern for the marines' safety that it should have.

In the weeks immediately after the bombing, I believe the last thing that we should do was turn tail and leave. Yet the irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policy there. If there would be some rethinking of policy before our men die, we would be a lot better off. If that policy had changed towards more of a neutral position and neutrality, those 241 marines would be alive today.

It is very easy to criticize the Government of Lebanon for not doing more about Hezbollah. I object to terrorism committed by Hezbollah because I am a strong opponent to all violence on all sides. But I also object to the unreasonable accusations that the Government of Lebanon has not done enough, when we realize that Israel occupied southern Lebanon for 18 years and was not able to neutralize Hezbollah.

Madam Speaker, there is nothing wrong with considering the fact that we don't have to be involved in every single fight. That was the conclusion that Ronald Reagan came to, and he was not an enemy of Israel. He was a friend of Israel. But he concluded that that is a mess over there. Let me just repeat those words that he used. He said, he came to the conclusion, "The irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policy there." I believe these words are probably more valid now even than when they were written.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF RUTH MCKENRY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Ruth McKenry. She was an exemplary woman and a premier advocate for health care and the agriculture industry in the Valley. She passed away on June 2, 2006.

Ruth McKenry was a native of New York. She graduated from Bellevue School of Nursing in 1943 and became a U.S. Navy Nurse Corps Lt.j.g. serving from 1944 to 1946. Soon after being honorably discharged in 1946, she moved to California with her husband and worked as a registered nurse in various hospitals in the Central Valley.

Having raised four children, Mrs. McKenry was very knowledgeable and experienced as a nurse. She worked for the Selma District Hos-

pital Emergency Room, as well as at the Doctor's Hospital in Modesto, California, specializing in orthopedics, cardiology, surgery and as a relief supervisor. Furthermore, having an extensive background and a great understanding of the health care industry, Ruth was a long-time advocate for improving the health care system in the country. She was involved in the politics of the Valley and held several important positions in different organizations.

Ruth maintained an encompassing interest in the activities of her community. She served as a Brownie Girl Scout Leader, 4-H Leader, and as a volunteer for a local Well Baby Clinic. Additionally, her involvement in many vital agricultural groups and organizations left a mark on the people of the Valley. After retiring as a registered nurse, Ruth farmed grape vineyards and together with her husband, managed McKenry Farms in Kingsburg, California. Being a farmer herself, Ruth was strongly engrossed in the workings of the agricultural industry. She served as the State and Federal Legislative Chair and the Agricultural Labor Chair for the California Women for Agriculture (CWA). She also served as the Agricultural Labor Chair for the American Agri-Women (AAW) and for the Tulare County Farm Bureau.

Additionally, Ruth was involved with Women in Farm Economics and the California Farm Bureau Federation Agricultural Labor Committee. Many of her colleagues, especially in the CWA and AAW attest to her enthusiasm and her driving force in pushing for change in the agricultural labor industry, especially in providing farm workers access to necessary health care programs. Ruth once stated, "My involvement in agricultural labor has given me an interest in affordable health care for the farm worker and both pre-natal and well baby care for his/her family. I am interested in the nation's rural areas [and] as an employer, access to affordable health care premiums is needed."

The positions she held on agricultural labor committees gave her the chance to promote the changes that were necessary for the advancement of the agriculture industry. Her hard work was witnessed and admired by her colleagues, and in 1986, after, being nominated by her fellow CWA members, she was awarded the prestigious Leaven Award, the highest award an American Agri-Woman can receive. Her ability to work with and influence those around her, and multiply the effectiveness of the organization was testimony to the character she possessed which made her truly deserving of the Leaven Award. In addition, California State Assemblymember Bruce Bronzan nominated her as the Woman of the Year in 1991 for her outstanding contributions to her community.

Ruth McKenry was a prime example of a strong resilient woman. She lived a life of purpose and served as a role model, not just for the youth in the Valley, but for her peers and colleagues. She was devoted to her family and deeply involved in the life of her children and grandchildren. She was honored by those who worked beside her and by those whose lives she was able to change and touch throughout her lifetime. Ruth McKenry's life is a prime example of pure passion and loyalty and of genuine interest in agriculture, one of the most vital sectors of the Central Valley. She had an outstanding life and will always be looked up to by those who knew her.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT AT-
TACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF
ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great sadness over the events in Lebanon.

I believe we must speak with one voice that Israel has a right to defend itself. I believe we are unanimous in our opinion that Hezbollah began this conflict; and I believe that we are unanimous that Iran and Syria continue to destructively meddle in the emerging democracy of Lebanon.

This resolution comes at a time when Lebanon—a potential unwavering ally to the United States, a western looking democracy, has become an unfortunate proxy in a war between Israel and extremism.

Right now, there are 5,000 of my constituents who are facing bombing raids and a harrowing escape from war. They were in Lebanon visiting friends, relatives, childhood homes, or just enjoying Lebanon's sites, and now they are in a war zone. As their representative, my first responsibility is to them.

The events of the last week have been horrific. The violence on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanon border has escalated, and more and more people, mostly civilians, have seen their lives forever changed.

Innocent Israelis and innocent Lebanese have been pulled into a conflict not of their own making. The "Peace of the Brave", that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin gave his life for, is today a lost hope.

Diplomacy, which the last Administration was criticized for using too much, seems to be a dirty word today.

This House, which after each Middle East conflagration brings a resolution of resolve and solidarity to the floor, could do much more to alleviate the suffering of the Lebanese.

Last summer, we passed unanimously a resolution that said, the United States would support efforts to enhance Lebanon's sovereignty. The same resolution said, "The United States should aid the people of Lebanon in their efforts to restore the separation of powers, the rule of law, and a proper respect for fundamental freedoms of every citizen."

We promised a commitment to the people of Lebanon that is not entirely reflected in this resolution. We said we would support them, and in my view the best way we can support them is to bring about a cessation of violence.

Israel's right to defend itself is absolute, but I am concerned that the current action will make it impossible for Lebanon's small military to properly assert itself along the troubled border.

We should support Prime Minister Tony Blair's plan to expand the international force along the southern border. We should also begin to rethink our own aid package to Lebanon's democratic government.

The United States can truly change hearts and minds in the Middle East if we commit ourselves to helping to rebuild Lebanon's infrastructure, help professionalize and equip their national military, and provide the eco-

nomie assistance they will need to keep their restive population employed and prosperous.

That is where I believe this resolution should be focused, and I believe it is in that omission that this Congress' policy is woefully inadequate.

The events of the past few days are heart-breaking. Not only because the unfolding violence involves our dear, and unwavering ally, Israel but also because it has sucked in Lebanon, a fragile nation that has had a bitter history and has only recently begun to reemerge from its dark past.

Madam Speaker, most tragically it was only 6 years ago that we were on the cusp of something almost magical—peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. The engagement of the United States was vital to that.

The brave dream laid out by Yitzhak Rabin was shattered by an assassin's bullet. The brave concessions by Ehud Barak and the support of President Clinton almost realized that dream.

But I believe we can get back to that moment. I believe it will take a fully engaged United States. I believe it will take a substantial investment on our part as a Congress to provide Lebanon and Israel with the assistance they need to overcome this crisis and re-establish security along their border.

Unfortunately, this resolution does not address these issues, and is an inadequate statement of policy to the parties who are friends of peace.

Madam Speaker, at this time I want to enter into the RECORD the names of twelve members of the Bzeih family who were killed as a result of the fighting—they have family in Michigan that held a memorial service for them on Sunday.

Hajji Fatme Bzeih, 80 years old; Hajji Thanya, 74 years old; Souad Nassour, 38 years old; Mariam Naem, 52 years old; Mohamad Naem, 17 years old; Malaak Naem, 17 years old; Hussein Naem, 11 years old; Naem Naem, 24 years old; Ammal Bzeih, 42 years old; Khouloud Bzeih, 18 years old; Farah Bzeih, 12 years old; and Aziza Bzeih, 9 years old.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT AT-
TACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF
ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 921, which expresses the United States House of Representatives' support for the government and people of Israel at this most difficult time, and also extends its condolences to the families of all the innocent victims of the ongoing violence. I further wish to express my condolences to the Americans who are stranded or trapped in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza amidst the crossfire between Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas. My thoughts are with them at this time.

Though I support this resolution, I feel it falls short in failing to call for an immediate cessation to the ongoing hostilities, for an end to the loss of civilian life and the destruction of

property that is occurring in Israel, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza. Violence, death and destruction are the unfortunate consequences of war. But, here, these consequences are especially unfortunate because they have been experienced almost entirely by innocent civilians from all sides of the conflict, rather than its actual combatants. Over 200 innocent Lebanese civilians have been killed, with at least a thousand more injured. This destruction of innocent lives must immediately come to an end.

It is the responsibility of our government to protect Americans everywhere and lead them to safety during times of war. It's estimated that approximately 25,000 Americans are in Lebanon. Yet after 7 days of fighting, the government has only managed to evacuate a few hundred. It is now reported that 7,000 more Americans are scheduled to be evacuated by naval ship to Cyprus by week's end, but this is still not enough. I urge the administration to increase the pace at which it is evacuating Americans from Lebanon.

The administration must play a different, far bolder and more balanced role in resolving the current Middle East hostilities. When it comes to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the administration has been disengaged for more than 5 years. Over the past 3 weeks, we have seen the disengagement.

Starting now, the United States must be willing to again engage itself, directly and forcefully, in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. We have played an important role in the prior progress that has been made toward peace and stability in the Middle East. We must resume this role. Secretary Condoleezza Rice must immediately lead the efforts for a multilateral diplomatic return to the peace process, and hang in there until real fundamental reconciliation is achieved.

Finally, I am deeply concerned about the impact the current crisis will have on the long-term prospects for peace in the Middle East and upon future generations in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, and Lebanon. A continuation of the violence and hatred will only serve to harden feelings and widen the gap now separating the people of this historic and cherished part of the world, and to make the securing of a real and permanent peace in the region more difficult and elusive than ever. Israel must learn to get along with its neighbors and vice versa.

Sometimes conditions need to hit bottom in the short term before they can get better in the long term. My fervent hope is that a decade from now, we will look upon these times as the bottom of the descent, and the beginning of a wondrous ascent, led by people of good faith in the Middle East and throughout the world, that ended the hatred and enmity between Israel and its neighbors, and produced the lasting peace that the peoples of the region pray for.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR CHARLES
IVAN BITHOS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt appreciation and