

TRIBUTE TO RABBI YISOCHER DOV
ROKEACH, THE BELZER REBBE,
UPON HIS VISIT TO NEW YORK

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rabbi Yisocher Dov Rokeach, known as the Belzer Rebbe, who will be visiting next week from Jerusalem. The Belzer Rebbe is the leader of a prominent Chassidic community whose core is based in my district in Boro Park and in Israel where Rabbi Rokeach resides. He stands out as an individual who has maintained the vibrancy and cohesion of a community, with followers who number in the thousands and reside around the world.

The Belzer Chassidic community was founded in Galicia, toward the end of the 18th century. It was well known for the wisdom of its leaders. During the Second World War, Nazi terror devastated the Belzer European community and the surviving Belzer Chassidim left Europe to try to revitalize their movement in Israel. Under the direction of the fourth Belzer Rebbe, they began a program of community building, developing schools for child and adult education, and creating supportive economic institutions for the multitudes who had been impoverished by an oppressive war.

In 1966, Rabbi Rokeach took over these efforts. He has since realized the post-war vision of Belzer revitalization and has infused new life into the Belzer community. The community presently sponsors numerous self-help organizations including one of the world's largest patients advocate organizations of its kind, a center for free medical counseling, and a clinic providing affordable medical treatment. In addition, the Belzer community prides itself upon the recent growth of its numerous yeshivot—academies for talmudic scholarship.

Hillel the Elder stated, "If I am not for myself then who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, then what am I?" The Belzer Chassidim reflect this message. Under the leadership of the Belzer Rebbe, this community has truly succeeded in forging the ethnic of self-help together with an awareness of social responsibility. The modern-day Belzer Rebbe has created a vibrant, exciting community that would make each of his predecessors proud.

GERMANTOWN HIGH SCHOOL TEAM
WINS TENNESSEE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ED BRYANT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. BRYANT of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advise this body that my own 7th District of Tennessee is the home of the best high school baseball team in the United States.

Germantown High School achieved perfection this year, compiling a record of 38-0, winning not only the Tennessee State Championship, but also national honors, being selected as the No. 1 team in America following their most successful season.

Coaches Phil Clark, Robert Armbruster, and John Perkins knew they had the makings of an outstanding team when, at the beginning of the year, their team won the Upper Deck baseball tournament in California. This tournament featured some of the very best high school teams from across the country.

As all of you can imagine, Germantown's team was a talented group of individuals. But they were a team in the true sense of the word. Not relying on a sole super star player, each member worked toward the common goal of winning, contributing a part to each victory. When one was not having a good day, others carried the team forward. Every day, some combination of pitching, hitting, running, defense, and strategy prevailed. Not once a let-down. This was an amazing accomplishment for a group of 15-18-year-old young men. Their committed effort dispels any current thought that our American youth lack focus or work ethic. If any of you doubt me, you should come to Germantown, TN and see for yourselves.

The players include some who have signed college scholarships, as well as several underclassmen who will return next year. Jay Hood has been drafted by the Minnesota Twins and also, has signed with Georgia Tech. Chris Lotterhos will go to Ole Miss, where his father played football a few years ago. Other members of this team are Ricky Brillard, Daniel Brown, Andy Brunetz, Michael Cobb, Phillip Cobb, Matt Hale, Tom Hilderbrand, Darrin Hope, Brian Kincheloe, Jeff Flein, Blaine Lester, Chad Moore, Brandon Morrison, Brent Reid, Cory Sumner, Jeremy Wade, Chris Winsett, Johnathan Winterrowd, Paul Wood, and Chris Hackett. Many of the boys have played baseball together for years previous. All now share a unique bond, an experience that none will soon forget, and that no one can take from them.

Any acknowledgment such as this would not be complete without pointing out the efforts, out front and behind the scenes, of the Germantown High School administration, coaches, loyal fans and especially, the wonderful parents and families who provided immeasurable support.

Again, congratulations to Germantown High School. You certainly have set the standard in high school baseball for years to come.

TRIBUTE FOR GEN. JOHN M. LOH

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Gen. John Michael Loh who is retiring after 35 years of faithful and distinguished military service to our Nation.

As one of our Air Force's most senior leaders, General Loh directly contributed to the revolutionary changes in the application of aerospace power that have resulted in dramatic improvements in our Nation's ability to achieve our security goals. General Loh's dedicated service and exceptional leadership helped ensure the U.S. Air Force excelled in the technologically demanding latter half of the cold war, in the crucible of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in the economic turbulence and changing geopolitical landscape of the 1990's.

General Loh's drive, vision, and extraordinary leadership skills set him apart from his peers and brought him varied, demanding assignments in which he always excelled. He was graduated eighth in the second class produced by the U.S. Air Force Academy. As a young pilot, he flew over 200 combat missions in the F-4 as a member of the 389th and 366th Tactical Fighter Squadrons at Da Nang Air Base, Republic of South Vietnam. On returning, he served as an engineer and test pilot, helping to usher in many of the technological innovations in today's fighter aircraft. He accumulated more than 5,000 hours as a command pilot in the F-4, F-104, A-7, F-16, and dozens of other aircraft. He capped his career by becoming one of the first to fly the Nation's most sophisticated combat aircraft—the B-2 bomber.

The general's contributions to the acquisition community began very early in his career. As a junior officer, he worked on the prototype of a highly capable yet low-cost fighter. It became the F-16. He won the Air Force Association's Daedalian Fellowship for his work and applied it to a graduate engineering program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Upon completion of the degree, he continued his work in fighter aircraft acquisition. His technical expertise and leadership resulted in the F-16 exceeding its program goals and going on to become one of the Nation's most successful fighter programs. Today, the F-16 comprises 53 percent of the Air Force's fighter and ground attack force, and it is the most successful foreign military sales program. General Loh also helped lay the groundwork for the F-22 fighter, B-2 bomber, and, as a former commander of the Air Force's agency for aircraft acquisition, he influenced every substantive program within the service.

Shortly after he became the Air Force's Vice Chief of Staff, Iraq invaded Kuwait. General Loh served as the acting Chief of Staff for the majority of Operation Desert Storm and played a key role in preparing the plan for the air campaign. His ability to work quietly behind the scenes to guide the implementation of innovative policies and lightning-quick acquisition and deployment of weapons played a significant part in the success of the Nation's war effort.

As the Soviet Union began to collapse, Air Force leadership decided to radically restructure the entire service. As the first commander of Air Combat Command, General Loh became the linchpin of this effort. He restructured the Air Force's combat forces, using the remnants of the inactivated Strategic Air Command, Tactical Air Command, and Military Air-Lift Command to build a more dynamic, fleet-footed, conventionally-oriented combat force. Within this new entity of more than 30 wings, 3,400 aircraft, and 250,000 active duty, Guard, Reserve, and civil service people, he engendered a new leadership style. He replaced the authoritarian style of ACC's predecessors with a people-oriented style based on trust, teamwork, and a mutual quest for continuous improvement. His success in bringing this leadership style into use resulted in the implementation of better practices and processes in every facet of the command's operations, leading to an outstanding response to contingencies in Southwest Asia, the former Yugoslavia, and Haiti to name just a few. His leadership style also saved the Air Force millions

of dollars and raised morale across the command despite the turbulence of the dramatic defense draw down. This success led to high praise from Vice President GORE during the National Performance Review and an invitation for General Loh to join him at the Reinventing Government Summit in Philadelphia in June of 1993.

As fiscal pressure and geopolitical necessities drove American forces to become increasingly expeditionary, General Loh became the leading advocate for the immediacy and flexibility of air power. Throughout his career, he has worked closely with local governments to foster technology transfer to private, non-defense businesses. The governors of Ohio and Virginia each chose him to co-chair their State's technology transfer and defense reutilization commissions. He has also been one of the Nation's most effective advocates for maintaining the unique portions of the Nation's industrial base that have allowed us to field weapons with stealth and other sophisticated, force-multiplying characteristics.

General Loh's ability to master diverse challenges and draw on his own experience to interweave the efforts of combat forces and the industries that support them has given the nation the world's preeminent combat air force. His vision of what this fighting force can and should be has made it a national model for the people-centered, intellectually nimble work horse of the future. None of these things would have been accomplished without General Loh's conviction, courage, and leadership. He set a new standard for air power and gave our Nation the world's most effective combat air force.

General John Michael Loh, on behalf of the Congress of the United States and the Americans we represent, I offer our sincere thanks for your dedicated and selfless service to our Nation.

AMENDMENT TO EXCLUDE LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAMS

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I am joined today by several of my colleagues, including Mr. McNULTY, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. VOLKMER, and Mr. SHAW, in introducing legislation to exclude Length of Service Award Programs [LOSAP's] for volunteers performing firefighting or prevention services, emergency medical services or ambulance services from section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code. Likewise, the legislation would exempt the LOSAP's from FICA and Medicare taxation. This corrective legislation would support the important role that volunteer firefighters and rescue personnel play in small towns and rural areas across the United States.

There are approximately 150,000 volunteer firefighters in about 37 States, who receive nominal awards, about \$250 per year on average, under LOSAP's from their governmental or tax-exempt fire districts. Volunteers earn awards under a LOSAP while they are performing volunteer services, on the basis of their years of service. However, the awards are not actually paid to volunteers in cash until

after they have retired as volunteers. There are similar award programs for volunteers performing other emergency medical services, such as rescue personnel and ambulance drivers.

These nonqualified plans are covered by section 457. Participants under a section 457 plan normally report for tax purposes any compensation deferred and any income attributable to the amounts when it is actually received, similar to so-called qualified pension plans. However, one of the requirements for delayed taxation under section 457 is to limit such deferred amounts to a percentage of compensation paid. Of course, with most volunteer fire and rescue personnel, there is no regular pay, or only nominal amounts to cover expenses. Section 457 is in the Code to prevent governmental and tax-exempt entities from setting aside excessive amounts of tax-deferred income for the highly compensated employees, while at the same time being able to avoid the nondiscrimination rules that are applicable to qualified plans. Volunteers are far from being highly compensated, so our proposal does not undermine this policy.

However, the result of the current limitations may be to tax the volunteer with zero or minimal pay, on the amounts set aside as LOSAP's for retirement, at the time the amounts vest with the volunteer; that is, there are no restrictions on the receipt other than the passage of time. This could result even though it may be years before the volunteer will actually receive any funds.

The proposal would provide that the LOSAP's are excluded from the provisions of section 457. The result would be deferral of taxation until the LOSAP awards are paid. It would also exempt the amounts awarded under the LOSAP's from FICA and Medicare payroll taxes. The latter provision is similar to other areas of the tax law, such as exempting Peace Corp allowances paid to volunteers, as well as other plans established by the Government for deferral of compensation.

The proposal would promote volunteerism in the United States. There are strong public policy reasons for promoting volunteerism, and programs such as LOSAP's are important in doing this. In many areas of the country it is not economically or geographically feasible to provide these fire protection and emergency medical services through paid career personnel.

We urge our colleagues to support this sensible and important legislation.

DEFENSE WORKERS HEALTH BENEFITS LEGISLATION

HON. DAVID E. SKAGGS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing legislation to provide health insurance benefits to former employees at defense nuclear facilities such as the Rocky Flats site in Colorado.

This bill, the Defense Nuclear Workers' Health Insurance Act of 1995, is essentially identical to a bill I introduced in the last Congress, and is based on provisions of a defense nuclear workers' bill of rights that I introduced in 1991. Other provisions of that larger

bill were enacted as part of the 1993 defense authorization bill.

The bill I am introducing today would establish a health insurance program to help with the costs of serious illnesses resulting from workplace exposure to radiation or toxic materials. This would be funded through the Department of Energy and would cover treatment costs exceeding \$25,000 for the covered illnesses or injuries.

Mr. Speaker, nuclear weapons plant workers were on America's frontlines in the cold war. They helped our national defense mission, working with dangerous materials often under conditions that would not be acceptable by today's standards. Now, as the work force at these sites is reduced, we need to act to assure prospective future employers that company health insurance rates will not be adversely affected if they hire these former defense workers. We also need to act to give these workers assurance that they'll have health insurance coverage for work-related illnesses.

This is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker. America has already rightly recognized a special obligation to veterans and to those exposed to dangerous levels of radiation during the cold war—uranium miners, people who were downwind from nuclear tests, and atomic veterans. Nuclear weapons workers deserve similar consideration, and this bill would provide that.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, this bill addresses two current and critical concerns raised by the Department of Defense: The lack of quality family dwellings and a shortage of troop barrack space.

Two-thirds of the 350,000 family housing units in the Department of Defense inventory are over 30 years old and require extensive maintenance. Troop housing is in an even more dire situation. About one-half of all military barracks were built 30 or more years ago. The Department of Defense considers more than a quarter of this housing substandard and in need of constant upkeep to deal with problems such as asbestos, corroded pipes, inadequate ventilation, faulty heating and cooling systems, and peeling lead-based paint. Mr. Speaker, our service men and women deserve more. Chairwoman VUCANOVICH's bill addresses this issue.

This bill also provides adequate support facilities for our service members and their families. These facilities are vital to ensure adequate working environments, productivity, and readiness, particularly with the growing number of deployments. They are essential to a strong national defense.

These men and women voluntarily put their lives on the line to serve their country. They deserve nothing less than the best we can offer them and I strongly urge support for this bill.