

Annual National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. The program honors hospitalized veterans who face unique day-to-day challenges. This is the one day of the year that the local community is asked to visit or pay special tribute to our hospitalized veterans. If friends and relatives can't visit hospitalized veterans today, I hope they will call them.

In connection with this special program, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues a project that has been underway for some time to provide patient bedside telephones—what most people consider a necessity—in VA medical centers. Anyone who has ever been a patient in a hospital or visited someone in a hospital knows that communicating with friends and family can be a very healing medication.

The Communication Workers of America, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the Pioneers of Telecommunications are donating their labor to complete many of the telephone projects now in progress. Mr. Frank Dosio heads the project and calls it PT Phone Home. The project is a cooperative effort among local telephone companies, telecommunications unions, PT Phone Home and the VA. The entire VA inpatient hospital system should have bedside phone service no later than December 1996.

VA facilities have office and operation telephone systems, however, telephone communication for patients was only available at a limited number of pay telephones in the hospitals. The expense of installing room telephones was a determining factor in not making in-room telephones available. With limited resources, the VA opted to focus on quality equipment, staff, and facilities and had to defer availability of private local telephones for patients. In recent years, the goal has been to make telephones available as new facilities were constructed.

The massive undertaking of making telephones available to more veterans who are patients now requires a considerable amount of planning and financing. One of the most important features about the current and comprehensive project, among others, is the help that is being provided by the local telecommunications labor force in the places where the VA facilities are located. The communications workers have donated valuable labor on their weekends and days off. And some communities have conducted local fund raisers for these worthwhile installations. These contributions say volumes about the goodwill our citizens and communities have for veterans.

Many of these veterans have spouses who cannot travel to the hospital. The telephone is, in many cases, the only means of finding out the condition and feelings of their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend everyone who has been involved in this project, especially the leadership of Frank Dosio and those who have assisted him. I have heard nothing but favorable comments from veteran patients throughout the country, and I urge Secretary Brown to make certain that every hospital in the VA system has bedside telephone service as soon as possible.

TRIBUTE TO PETTY OFFICER OSCAR GOMEZ

HON. RONALD D. COLEMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to Petty Officer Oscar Gomez who has been recognized as the Nation's Navy Reserve Enlisted Recruiter of the Year.

Petty Officer Gomez has spent 10 of his 13 years on active duty with the Navy. He set a goal of 46 recruits at the beginning of fiscal year 1994 and achieved 167 percent of that goal by signing up 77 recruits. Gomez will be promoted to Petty Officer 1st Class in El Paso. The El Paso recruiting office can claim both the country's top recruiter and the Nation's top recruiting office for the past several years.

This achievement is especially remarkable in light of the fact that El Paso is a landlocked city in the middle of the southwest desert.

Mr. Speaker, Oscar Gomez is an outstanding citizen and a national treasure, and I am privileged to count him as one of my constituents. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Petty Officer Oscar Gomez for his efforts and tireless service to our Nation and saluting him in this milestone in his professional career.

IN RECOGNITION OF MANOLO REYES

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join with thousands of my constituents and recognize Dr. Manolo Reyes for over a half century of public service in this country and in his native Cuba.

On the occasion of his 70th birthday, Manolo Reyes had a street in Miami named in his honor in recognition of decades of leadership in south Florida. Manolo Reyes earned a law degree in Cuba and was a successful figure on Cuban television. With the establishment of the Castro dictatorship, he joined thousands of his fellow Cubans in a life of exile.

In Miami, he became the face of the exile community for an entire generation of Cubans and non-Cubans alike, as the first Hispanic television news anchor in the United States. Those of us who grew up watching his morning newscast remember his dignified and authoritative delivery of the day's events. For his ground breaking work in television journalism Manolo Reyes received an Emmy.

After earning a second law degree in the United States, Manolo entered a second career in the health care field. Since 1987, he has worked at Mercy Hospital overseeing patient and governmental activities.

In addition to all this, Dr. Reyes founded the Saint John Bosco Clinic which helps care for those who would otherwise fall through the cracks in the health care system. He has been quoted as saying "next to my family, this clinic is the most precious act of love in my life."

To Manolo Reyes and his family, I offer my congratulations on the recognition of a lifetime of achievement and best wishes for many more years of success.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOCK GRANTS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE C. LATOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 13, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 728) to control crime by providing law enforcement block grants.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, just a few days prior to the last election, in Wickliffe, OH, a man armed with a shotgun went into a middle school and began firing indiscriminately. Tragically, a long-time school employee lay dead at the conclusion of this rampage, others were wounded, and the psychological terror visited upon the staff and students has yet to be quantified.

The police response time was excellent, the police work was excellent, and now the issue of the gunman's guilt or innocence will be left up to the judicial system.

In the last week, Wickliffe qualified for and received a 3 year grant under the Cops Fast Program to place an additional police officer on the street. Everyone connected with law enforcement recognizes that more police officers on the street is a good thing. However, 10 new police officers would have done nothing to prevent the tragedy last November in Wickliffe.

The good news is that the block grant program now under debate in this House will keep in place the additional police officer received by Wickliffe and any other locality that has received funding under the provisions passed in last year's crime bill. The better news is that the Republican block grant program will give to Wickliffe and other cities the flexibility to engage in school security measures that may have a preventive impact upon future tragedies.

Local communities will have the option of applying for and receiving funds to acquire metal detectors, security guards and/or security cameras and systems for their schools if those local communities feel that that is one of the more pressing needs to fight crime in their communities. No longer will they be subject to a one size fits all solution and be required to buy off-the-rack crime prevention. Instead, they will be able to employ a tailor-made, local solution to their most pressing needs. As with many of the provisions in this year's crime bill debate, this solution just makes sense in the daily battle against crime.

REPRESENTATIVE TORRICELLI— PERSPECTIVE ON NATO EXPANSION

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, last week the Los Angeles Times ran an excellent article by

our colleague ROBERT TORRICELLI on the question of NATO expansion. He points out that the Contract With America's National Security Revitalization Act, H.R. 7, proposes the most significant expansion of U.S. military commitments in 40 years. I agree with him that "the American people should insist that swift expansion of NATO is a pledge that should not be kept." The text of Mr. TORRICELLI's article follows:

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 9, 1995]

PERSPECTIVE ON NATO EXPANSION—A

PROMISE BEST NOT KEPT

(By Robert G. Torricelli)

The Republican "contract with America" contains a proposal for the expansion of NATO to include the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary by 1999. The Baltic states and Ukraine would follow. This represents the most significant potential expansion of United States military commitments in 40 years. It is one promise by the new congressional majority that is best forgotten.

The central feature of the NATO treaty is Article V, which commits each signatory to regard an attack on any one state to be an attack on each state. It is an unequivocal pledge of war.

The success of NATO during the Cold War was a result of the credibility of the signatories. World Wars I and II demonstrated that the United States regarded the security of Western Europe as central to its own freedom and prosperity. It was not a difficult commitment for a potential adversary to understand. With \$200 billion in transatlantic trade, there is no separating the economic futures of the United States and our allies. Similar political institutions gave the treaty meaning and military capabilities gave it credibility.

An arbitrary expansion of our NATO obligations to these Eastern European nations would not conform to the original treaty objectives. A future adversary would never believe that the United States would risk its own survival to extend the nuclear umbrella in defense of nations where it has little economic, political or security interests.

Conventional military assistance would be no more credible. The Balkans war has set the precedent with the United States' refusal to become involved and our allies' rejection of military force to defend interests on their own frontiers against a comparatively weak opponent.

This is not to suggest that the United States does not sympathize with the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. We welcome their freedom, and their success is in our national interest. We should give them substantial economic, trade and security assistance. But a commitment to wage war requires a vital national interest of a different dimension.

Central to the arguments against the "contract with America" pledge of NATO expansion are the contradictions that it represents. Republican promises of a strong national defense would be undermined by rapid NATO expansion. Great powers make impossible or insincere military commitments at great risk. A commitment of assistance to a small European state that is not fulfilled might lead an adversary to conclude that a genuine interest protected by the same pledge also will not be defended.

Underlying the policy debate is the question of capability. The ability of the United States to defend the current 15 NATO nations in a prolonged conflict with Russia was always arguable. Now Republicans contend that, having reduced our own forces by 25% and withdrawn 200,000 troops from Europe, the United States should rapidly expand our

commitments to four additional nations and 73 million people. The credibility of their proposal is further compromised by their assurance that such an expansion can be achieved at no cost to the American taxpayer.

None of these potential allies offers any serious military ability to contribute to its own security. None is equipped with weapons or ordnance compatible with our own. Opposing Russian military forces, while diminished, include 72 divisions totaling 2.4 million men in adjoining regions. Their potential under some future authoritarian government commanding a nation of 150 million is obviously considerable.

Concern with the impracticability of broadening our military obligations is inevitability leading some to compromise. They propose that some nations join NATO while those more proximate to Russia be excluded. This represents the worst of all outcomes. NATO would still be left with responsibilities that it cannot fulfill, and the excluded states would implicitly fall into a new Russian sphere of influence. A new line would be drawn across Europe.

Missing from arguments for NATO expansion is an understanding that the central element in the maintenance of Eastern European security is the strengthening of Russian democracy. The ultimate maintenance of Eastern European sovereignty will be decided by the struggle for power within Russia. NATO expansion would strengthen Russian nationalist forces and, ironically, undermine the very Russian institutions and leaders that offer the principal opportunity to maintain Eastern European security.

The Clinton Administration's "partnership for peace" offers a far more balanced approach. Joint training exercises in the Netherlands and Poland are an example of the alliance's ability to increase capabilities. The promise of increase capabilities. The promise of eventual NATO membership sends a signal of our interest without recklessly committing ourselves to a future conflict.

The Republican leadership is determined to restore electoral confidence in Congress by maintaining campaign promises. The American people should insist that swift expansion of NATO is a pledge that should not be kept.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

HON. MIKE WARD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to join my colleagues in commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters.

Building on the strengths and hardships of the women's suffrage movement, Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters and urged its members to be active participants in their government, not bystanders. However, Catt's effort did not end with securing women the right to vote, she demanded the full inclusion of women into every aspect of society: political, social, and economic.

Today, women have gained much in the areas of political and social equality; however, in terms of economic equality, women fall far short of their male counterpart. We know that 62 percent of the minimum-wage earners in the United States are women, but many in our government are still not committed to raising the minimum wage and empowering women

with the economic security they so rightly deserve.

I hope that my colleagues will reflect upon the numerous achievements and successes the League of Women Voters have gained and recognize how crucial economic stability is for all, but especially for women.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

HON. PAT DANNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Ms. DANNER. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 75th anniversary of a defining moment in American history, a moment that is partially responsible for me and for all of my female colleagues serving the American people as Members of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago a courageous woman named Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters.

Since its inception, the league has championed equal rights for not only women, but for all Americans, regardless of gender, race, or religion. This creed of equality, this commitment to freedom and justice transcends the vision of our Founding Fathers.

With the proper focus on education as the means to liberty, the league has been instrumental in providing access at all levels for people who were once ignored, who were once denied, and who were once suppressed. Much has been accomplished since the 1920's movement for women's suffrage.

With the help of organizations such as the League of Women Voters, we as a people can do even more.

TRIBUTE TO THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this Valentine's Day to commemorate a very special organization. The League of Women Voters turns 75 today, and it deserves our congratulations.

The league traces its roots back to the suffrage movement, and since then it has enjoyed great significance in American civic life. Dedicated to educating the American voter, the league's leaders have led the way in increasing the public's understanding of the great policy debates that have shaped our time. The wide scope of its concerns, on issues that rage everywhere from townhalls to the halls of Congress, is illustrative of their true devotion to the democratic system.

With 1,100 chapters nationwide and a membership of 150,000, the league continues to exert outstanding leadership in ensuring that the American electorate is an educated one. I am sure that no one in this body has been denied the benefit of the league's involvement in their elections.

I, myself, enjoyed an engaging evening at a League of Women Voters candidates' forum during my campaign, and was provided the