

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1996

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9083 in Parkville, MD which is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

In 1946, as returning soldiers from World War II, these veterans found themselves informally meeting at neighborhood stores or on the street. It quickly became clear that they needed a more formal meeting place; somewhere to come together to be with others who had shared the same experiences that were so binding.

The Parkville VFW post began with 15 charter members; today it boasts 1,851 members. The post has grown along with the Parkville neighborhood and through the years has done an outstanding job of serving both the community and its members.

The VFW post has an impressive record of service. The post raised more than \$10,000 for the Johns Hopkins Children's Cancer Fund in one of its most successful endeavors. The post sponsors events for high school students such as the VFW Voice of Democracy Oratory Contest, which awards a \$25,000 scholarship to the national winner. Its assistance with local scout troops and ROTC groups also has benefited the youth of Parkville.

The VFW post members have a strong bond with veterans in the area. Their long-standing tradition of sponsoring a monthly event at the Fort Howard Veterans Hospital has helped to lift the spirits of many sick and disabled veterans. This VFW post is marked by the caring assistance its members extend to fellow veterans and their families. Every meeting begins with the question: "Is there a member of the post or a family member in distress?"

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Parkville VFW post on its 50th anniversary. The veterans who fought to keep our country free have worked hard to make our community a better place to live. The veterans of Post 9083 have shown an uncommon caring and dedication to others that truly make them a valued asset to our community.

TRIBUTE TO JOSE "CHEGUI" TORRES

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1996

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to a dear friend, Jose "Chegui" Torres, an accomplished boxer and writer whose 60th birthday will be celebrated today among family and friends at Jimmy's Bronx Cafe in the Bronx, NY.

A fellow countryman, Chegui, as his close friends call him, was born in "la Playa de Ponce," Puerto Rico. His talent in boxing was evident at a very young age. In 1956, Chegui won the silver medal in the Olympics in Melbourne, Australia. A year later, he migrated to the United States to continue his successful career in boxing.

In 1965, Jose won the light heavyweight world title at a match at the Madison Square Garden, New York City. He was the first Puerto Rican to ever win a medium weight world championship in boxing. Members of the East Harlem community, in which he lived, made him a hero that day and held a parade to celebrate his victory. It was during this parade that Jose took the stage to acknowledge the thousands of fans and distinguished himself as an eloquent speaker.

Jose is characterized as a person who can talk to people from all socio-economic backgrounds. He is well liked and respected in the community. Throughout the years, Jose has been a community activist and a fighter for minorities and poor people.

After retiring from his boxing career, Jose was appointed by former Gov. Mario Cuomo to lead the New York State Athletic Commission. He also served City Council President Paul D'wyer, and worked in the election campaigns of then candidate to Congress Nydia Velázquez, and Mayor David Dinkins.

Most recently, Jose has collaborated with the daily newspapers the New York Post and "El Diario/La Prensa," as a guest columnist. He frequently writes about a wide variety of subject matters, from boxing and city life, to the socioeconomic plight of the poor, the elderly, and minorities. He has also written books on Muhammad Ali and Mike Tyson.

On his 60th birthday, his wife, Ramona, friends, and other relatives will gather at Jimmy's Bronx Cafe for a surprise birthday party.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Jose "Chegui" Torres, a remarkable friend and individual, a happy birthday and a long and healthy life.

IN HONOR OF ALAN FRIEDMAN

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1996

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, as an early supporter of the Constitutional Rights Foundation, I know how extraordinarily important its education programs are to southern California students. Fortunately so does Alan Friedman, a socially conscious power lawyer who was president of CRF's board of directors from 1992 through 1993.

I am pleased to learn that Alan and another close friend and life force, Jack Valenti, will be honored by the Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles on May 7. Alan has been an active member of the board of directors of the Constitutional Rights Foundation since

1986, taking particular interest in its programs dealing with national and community service. During his presidency of the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Los Angeles experienced the riots in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict. Alan rightfully takes pride in the Constitutional Rights Foundation's quick response to the riots by creating teaching materials and developing community service programs involving thousands of Los Angeles youth.

Alan is active in many areas in the community. He is a past chair of the labor law section of the Los Angeles Bar, served as labor relations counsel to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, and was for many years chair of Mayor Bradley's Labor-Management Advisory Committee. Alan also served on the Los Angeles Board of Civil Service Commissioners and was its president from 1985 to 1986. From 1990 to 1991, he was president of the Board of Bet Tzedek—House of Justice—Legal Services Foundation and continues to serve on its board.

Mr. Speaker, public service is the highest calling. At a time when public budgets are strained, it is particularly noteworthy that fine lawyers like Alan Friedman step up. I salute him.

IN HONOR OF JON THOMAS

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1996

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize an impressive young North Dakotan. Jon Thomas of Bismarck has won a scholarship from the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Voice of Democracy broadcast scriptwriting contest. Mr. Thomas placed fifth in the Nation for the theme "Answering America's Call."

I am very excited to see such worthwhile ideas and refreshing optimism coming from North Dakota's youth. It is my pleasure to submit Mr. Thomas' essay for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Last summer, I decided to leave the country and travel the world. One month into my trip I was feeling quite homesick. So I decided I'd better call home. I quickly ran to a pay phone and dialed 1-800-Collect. I knew that if I ever needed anything, calling collect would not be a problem. I then dialed America and listened for an operator to pick up.

"Hello. You have reached the United States of America, the land of opportunity, freedom, individual rights and expression * * * I'm sorry but we can't answer the phone right now, because no one here knows how to answer America's call."

I couldn't believe it!! Here I was in a foreign country, trying to get through to my home, and it wasn't possible! Why? Because a bunch of USA operators didn't know what it was to answer America's call. Hey!! That's easy! No Problem! Even I could do that! Couldn't I?

Maybe I could see America differently now because I was away from it. Maybe the people who are in America are taking it for

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

granted. Standing here in a third world country, I could see the difference that being an American had made in my life. I did not have to live in a shack made of tin or corn stalks. I had shoes and many changes of clothing. I had the right to speak out against anything. I had a family. I had an education. I had rights guaranteed to me by my country's government. And I had a say in that government.

Maybe the problem is that people in America are focusing on what's wrong. They're looking so hard at what is wrong in our country that they can't see what is right.

We blame different groups for our problems, saying "These people are like this, or these people do this." We focus only on the negative. That perspective is not totally true. What about the good these people do, or the good that they could do? What about the people who aren't in that group, but also helped cause the problem? Can't we change our focus?

It's time that we remember that Americans are individuals. Americans are each entitled to their own opinion. Their opinions shouldn't be taken away from them, or ridiculed.

It's time to look at the last four letters in American, "I can." The phrase "I can" means that you have faith in yourself and in your abilities, that you can take responsibility for your own life. It is knowing that: I can achieve my dream.

Now is the time for us to answer America's call. It's time to stand up and say "What good have we done? What good can we do?"

The answer to America's call is to be as proud, as respectful, as positive, as caring, as grateful, as understanding, and as loving, as we can be * * * to ourselves, our families, our country, and our fellow man.

We need to stand up and say I can help myself. I can make a difference. It is time for all of us, as Americans, to stand up and say I can answer America's call.

How? Instead of complaining or blaming others for our problems, we need to look at ourselves. No matter how different we are as individual Americans, we all have one thing in common. We are all free. We need to encourage everyone to use their freedoms. We must answer America's call by being true to ourselves. We need to answer it in our own way and let others answer it in their own way.

If I could figure out America's call so easily, I knew at least one of my fellow Americans must have figured it out too. I ran to the phone again, this time hoping I would get through and that someone, in America, would answer the call. The phone rang and rang. Finally, the operator picked up.

"I'm sorry," he said. "All our lines are busy right now. Could you please hold?" "Sure," I answered. Then I thought, "That was a good sign. At least I wasn't getting another machine."

America the Beautiful played softly in my ear. I listened closely to the words. The song made me feel homesick and proud at the same time. Before the song was over, the operator returned: "Hello, This is the United States of America, the country where people say 'I can.' What can I do to help you?"

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S SPEECH TO
AIPAC ON ISRAELI-AMERICAN
RELATIONS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1996

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last week the American Israel Public Affairs Committee held

its annual policy conference here in Washington to consider the status of United States relations with Israel. The highlight of that conference was the session at which Israeli President Shimon Peres and President Bill Clinton addressed conference participants.

The President's address was an outstanding discussion of the American interest and commitment to bringing peace to the Middle East and of the necessity for a strong and secure Israel in order for that peace process to move forward. Mr. Speaker, I have seldom heard such a strong and convincing argument for the active and positive participation of the United States in the Middle East.

I ask that the remarks of President Clinton be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give them careful and thoughtful consideration.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO 1996 AMERICAN-ISRAELI PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE POLICY CONFERENCE

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. (Applause.) Mr. Prime Minister, I just thought I was tired because it was late Sunday night. I never felt better in my life. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Mr. Prime Minister, Ambassador Rubinovich, Secretary Glickman, Ambassador Indyk, President Dow, thank you for that wonderful introduction. Mr. Grossman, Mr. Sher (phonetic), Mr. Bronfman (phonetic), Mr. Levy, Mr. Jack Bendheim, who also gave a wonderful introduction; the co-chairs of this event, Art Sandler and Betsy Sheer (phonetic); to all the young students who are here. (Applause.)

The Prime Minister referred on two occasions to the opportunity that I had on my last trip to Israel to meet with the young people there. It was an incredible experience for me. And I realized that in some ways we have to keep depending on young people to deliver us because they remind us that we can break new ground and make tomorrow different from yesterday.

Just before the Prime Minister and I came in here tonight, we received petitions for peace signed largely by college students that were presented by Jonathan Epstein of Trinity College and Abigail Michelson of Brandeis, and I'd like to thank them. I think they're over here. I thank them very much for what they did for that. (Applause.)

I would also like to say a special word of thanks to the members of Congress who are here who have supported our administration's policies in the Middle East. If I miss someone who I do not see, write my a nasty note tomorrow. (Laughter.) But I would like to say a special word of thanks to Senator Lautenberg, Congressman Frost, Congressman Engel, Congresswoman Lowey, Congressman Waxman, and Congressman Levin. (Applause.) And I hope I didn't miss anybody; we can't afford to lose any more friends in Congress. (Laughter and applause.)

When the Prime Minister said that Israel was now spending as much money on education as defense, I thought of seeing if I could get him to stay another week and just testify before a few committees. (Laughter and applause.) And when you, sir, said that I had made history for a second time, I can see myself being guilt-peddled into the future—I can make history now every year from now on until the end of my life. (Laughter and applause.)

Since I associate you with the struggle for peace, I can't help, if you will indulge me one real purely personal observation—the last time I appeared before this conference before last year was in 1989, when the person who was supposed to appear on behalf of the Democratic Party against Lee Atwater went

to his daughter's college graduation. I thought he had his priorities in order, and so when he asked me to replace him, I was glad to stand in for Ron Brown. (Applause.) And since he lost his life on another remarkable mission of peace, I thought I would share that with you tonight, and I hope you will remember that and remember him and his family in your prayers.

I am pleased as the Prime Minister is that we can come here tonight with the northern border of Israel and the southern border of Lebanon quiet—no katyusha rockets firing down on the people of Northern Israel. I thank the Prime Minister for the tremendous work he did. And in his absence—and I hope to goodness he's sleeping right now—I want to thank the Secretary of State for his magnificent Herculean effort. (Applause.) I also thank his partner and great unsung hero, Dennis Ross, for what he has done. (Applause.)

As the Prime Minister said, we had an agreement back in 1993, but it wasn't in writing and it was shattered. For the first time now, there is an agreement in writing that will be more effective in preventing further outbreaks. The violence has stopped. There is now a monitoring mechanism to which Israel and Lebanon can refer complaints. And now it is our fond hope that civilians on both sides of the border can resume their lives with greater confidence and security. And we will not tolerate further efforts to disrupt the calm.

When I came into office, I was determined that our country would go into the 21st century still the world's greatest force for peace and freedom, for democracy and security and prosperity. We have to promote these values just as vigorously as we did in the Cold War. Indeed, in some ways, our responsibilities as Americans are now greater.

I know that you agree with that. You have devoted yourselves to strengthening the bonds between the United States and Israel, a cornerstone of our foreign policy and of our efforts to advance peace and freedom and democracy in the Middle East. I thank you for that and I ask you, too, to continue to speak out in a larger sense for America's role in the world. It has made a difference what we have done in the Middle East, and in Bosnia, and in Northern Ireland, and in Haiti, and in fighting against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in leading the world to take a tougher stand against terrorism. We cannot afford to walk away from these responsibilities to the future of our children, our children's children, and the children of all the world. (Applause.)

What a difference a year can make. It was at this conference last year that Israel's then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said, from day one Israel found itself in a unique alliance with the United States, resting on twin pillars of shared values and strategic partnership. Well, it's still true. And now the United States and Israel are still partners based on shared values and common strategies.

I am grateful for the service, the life and the sacrifice of Prime Minister Rabin. (Applause.) But I am also very grateful that the man he called his full partner, our friend Shimon Peres, is carrying forward the important work of peace with security. (Applause.)

From his earliest days when he helped to establish Israel's military, up to the very present when he has defined a vision of a new Middle East in his remarkable book—which, Prime Minister, I have told the whole world I enjoyed reading, and I'm promoting it for you and I hope I get a certain percentage kickback if it really does very well. (Laughter.) We just made another agreement. They're just spouting out all over. (Laughter and applause.)