

one among many nations seeking to compete in global markets, and without the comfort of an enemy to galvanize its will.

In these circumstances, Ben Gilman's approach to foreign policy deserves to be understood for what it is: the best possible approach under the circumstances. It amounts to a return to the stripped-down apparatus with which America entered the post-World War II era: a president who makes foreign policy through his secretary of state, with the advice and consent of Congress, but without the bureaucratic barnacles that have grown up over 50 years.

Like the foreign policy of the Marshall Plan, the support for the Foreign Policy Reform Act is selfconsciously bipartisan. Freshmen hotheads made a bold attempt to derail Gilman's ascension to the international relations committee's chair (he replaced Representative Lee Hamilton) following the surprise Republican conquest of the House in 1994; he was too much a Rockefeller Republican for some. (A moderate, Gilman was elected to Congress on Richard Nixon's coat-tails in 1972.)

Yet Gilman works well with his Republican counterpart in the Senate, Jesse Helms. Gilman retains the respect of the Democrats. And he keeps a light checkrein on the Clinton administration, causing few embarrassments, but regularly extracting compromises in cases where he believes US policy is overly soft or harsh—in China, in Bosnia, in Somalia, in Haiti, in the Ukraine.

It is picturesque that debate should be scheduled to begin on Gilman's bill on Tuesday—in time to offer the possibility that it could come to a vote in the House on the 50th anniversary of Marshall's famous speech at Harvard, June 5.

So never mind the nostalgia. Great deeds are still being undertaken. The shaping economic development around the world has replaced defense as the cutting edge of foreign policy. It is possible that the next 50 years will be even better than the last.

## JOBS FOR OLDER WORKERS

### HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 1997

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call your attention to an uplifting story in the San Jose Mercury News, describing how a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, Mr. Jessie Singh, has built his high-tech enterprise with the help of senior workers including many immigrants.

It is a sad fact that older workers face significant obstacles in obtaining employment. But, as Mr. Singh's model shows, seniors can excel at the workplace.

As our country continues to address the issue of welfare reform, we need to recognize that many older workers do want to work hard, and will work hard, if given the opportunity. Our economic future depends on employing the talents of all our residents.

[From the San Jose Mercury News, Apr. 8, 1997]

THREESCORE YEARS—AND HIRED MILPITAS HIGH-TECH FIRM FINDS ITS OLDER WORKERS TO BE LOYAL DEPENDABLE

(By Carolyn Jung)

It's a familiar sight at many Silicon Valley high-tech companies—throng of 20- and 30-somethings hunched over computer terminals, assembling circuit boards, chomping pizza or playing foosball.

But visit BJS Electronics Inc. in Milpitas and you'll find several workers of a decidedly different age, with a few more gray hairs, embarking on a new career in their golden years.

The company, one of the largest independent distributors of memory chips, is doing something few other high-tech firms seem willing to do—hiring older workers in their 50s and 60s. In BJS' case, many of them are also immigrants who face the loss of Supplemental Security Income funds in August because they are not naturalized citizens.

Of the company's 68 employers, 10 range in age from 52 to 69. They have been hired as security guards, warehouse workers and circuit-board testers. With these jobs, they say, they've gained self-esteem and greater respect among friends and family members. And at a time when many employees routinely jump from job to job, company officials say they've garnered a group of dependable employees who work hard and remain loyal to the company.

Company Chief Executive Jessie Singh, who came here from India with only \$8 in his pocket and now owns a company that boasts \$240 million in sales annually, said he made a special effort to hire older workers because he understands how they feel.

"Seniors are mostly unwanted in society or used by their children who bring them to this country just to babysit the grandchildren," said Singh, 38. "This is chance for them to get out of the house. They can prove they're not less than anyone else."

Bill Payson, president of Senior Staff, a job databank for seniors in Silicon Valley, applauds BJS Electronics' hiring practice, which he calls a rarity in this industry. While many of the 3,500 seniors listed with the databank want to work in high-tech, the job listings Payson gets from such companies are few.

Indeed, industry representatives for Joint Venture: Silicon Valley and the Santa Clara Valley Manufacturing Group said they are unsure if any high-tech companies make an effort to hire older workers.

#### OVER 35 IS OVER THE HILL

"High-tech companies are notoriously prejudiced against older folks. They think anyone over 35 is over the hill," Payson said. "For this company (BJS) to have that large a proportion of older workers, I'd give them high marks for that. This is the coming trend. And this company is ahead of the wave."

About 21 percent of the population in Santa Clara County is age 50 or over, according to U.S. Census data. About 9 percent is age 65 or older. (Payson and some advocacy groups designate people over 50 as seniors. The federal government has no single definition. Laws governing housing, social services and medical care set different age limits.)

Of the age 50-and-over group, 50 percent work because they need the money or because they want to stay useful, Payson said. For those with good computer and office skills, jobs are not as hard to find, advocates for the elderly said. But for those who speak limited English, who have transportation problems or who have little work experience in this country, it can be far more difficult.

"Most of the older people I work with feel there's discrimination out there, that they're under-rated as far as their health and skills," said Sue LaForge, director of the National Council on Aging's job-training program. "But the situation is getting better. Employers are starting to see seniors as a desirable addition to their workforce."

#### COST OF LIVING A FACTOR

LaForge hopes more Silicon Valley high-tech companies follow suit, particularly because more seniors—the fastest-growing seg-

ment of the population—find it necessary to continue working because of the high cost of living here.

At BJS Electronics, seniors such as Sampuran Singh work alongside other workers half their age. For the past four months, the retired bank inspector from India has helped fill sales for the \$1,300 memory chips that are assembled onto circuit boards and sold to companies such as Hewlett-Packard.

"I want to contribute to the economy of America," said the 61-year-old immigrant who came to the United States a year and a half ago. "We don't want to be dependent on the government. We shouldn't be a burden on others."

Jessie Singh, BJS' chief executive, said he got the idea to hire the seniors when he heard Mayor Susan Hammer speak last summer about the jarring effects welfare reform could have on legal immigrants.

He approached San Jose's Northside Community Center, which provides nutritional and social services for Indo-American and Filipino-American seniors, to find a senior to employ. The center sent over four. Jessie Singh hired all of them.

Of the 10 older workers at BJS Electronics, eight are Indo-Americans, one is of Chinese descent from the Philippines and another is white. Their previous occupations include physical education teacher, cab driver, farmer and army officer. None had ever worked at a high-tech company.

Now, they work full time, 40 hours a week, making about \$7 an hour with full medical benefits. Advocates for the elderly said they consider that a fair wage. Payson noted that many of his seniors get paid up to \$14 an hour, but those are usually part-time jobs that don't include benefits.

Jessie Singh said he wanted to help those struggling to regain a foothold in life because it's an experience he knows all too well, having left Punjab, India, 11 years ago with almost nothing and moving to Santa Clara with his wife, Surinder, after a traditional marriage arranged by their parents.

Even though he had an engineering degree and once supervised 1,500 employees in India, he found it nearly impossible to get a skilled job here.

#### RESUMES AT THE GAS PUMP

So for the first four months, he delivered pizzas and pumped gas. He would hand out his resume at the full-service pump, figuring anyone buying premium could hire him.

"I did get a lot of response from that," he said. "But they all still wanted work experience in the United States, and I didn't have any. I was so frustrated."

He started asking friends in India for help. One friend, a distributor of computer chips, asked Singh to help him purchase from Silicon Valley vendors some memory chips that would be sold to buyers in India.

"I didn't even know what a memory chip was," Singh said about the component that stores data temporarily while the microprocessor carries out its work.

Even so, he went to work, buying the chips for his friend and making a 10 percent commission on each deal. He soon realized that instead of being just a middleman, it would be more worthwhile to strike out on his own.

He borrowed money from friends and relatives and ran a one-man operation out of his Santa Clara apartment.

These days, the millionaire businessman operates out of a 45,000-square-foot, high-security building where more than 10,000 memory chips go out each day.

Now, Jessie Singh hopes other companies will copy his efforts in hiring seniors. Surjit Sohi, 57, who has worked as an operations manager at BJS Electronics for more than a year, hopes so, too.

"In India, age counts for you," said Sohi, a retired army general who immigrated here three years ago. "But in America, age goes against you. We should get over the barriers of age. We want to show everyone that we can still do well at our age."

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE  
LESTER F. HERRSCHAFT

**HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 1997*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the Honorable Lester F. Herrschaft, Councilman for the City of Clifton, New Jersey who is being honored by Knights of Columbus Council 3769 as their "Man of the Year."

Councilman Herrschaft was born and raised in the City of Clifton. He is a graduate of Clifton Elementary School No. 6 and Clifton High School. He entered the service upon graduation from high school and served with the Army (infantry) in Europe during World War II. He is a member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Clifton Chapter No. 1, the American Legion Post No. 8 and the Athenia Veterans Post, Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Councilman Herrschaft is a principal and chief financial officer of Albert A. Stier Inc., and affiliated Realty Corporations of Clifton and manager of Styertowne Shopping Center. While successful professionally, Councilman Herrschaft has never forgotten about his community.

His involvements are numerous. Councilman Herrschaft has served for 15 years on the Clifton Board of Education, and for seven of those years, served as president. He is a former trustee of both the Clifton Boys Club and the Passaic-Clifton Boys Club and the Passaic-Clifton YMCA, has served as Special Gifts Chairman of the Passaic Valley United Way, and serves on the board of the Clifton Adult Opportunity Center. Councilman Herrschaft further served on the Board of Governors of Passaic General Hospital. He serves on the Advisory Board of the Valley National Bank and was appointed by the Supreme Court to serve on the Passaic County Legal Free Arbitration Committee. He is a member and past president of the Clifton Rotary Club. He is a member of Clifton Lodge No. 203 and president of the Clifton Masonic Temple Association. Councilman Herrschaft was the recipient of the Joseph J. Kolodziej Humanitarian Award in February 1993 and the Clifton Optimist Man of the Year in 1995.

Councilman Herrschaft was elected to his third term of the Clifton Municipal Council in July 1994. He contributes to many charitable endeavors. Councilman Herrschaft is a member of the Salaam Temple of the Shrine and is actively involved in the support of the Shrine Crippled Childrens Hospital and Burn Center.

Councilman Herrschaft is a graduate of Fairleigh Dickinson University where he was awarded his Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in management. He and his wife, Dorothy, reside in Clifton and have two sons, Skip and Peter and three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, Councilman Herrschaft's family and

friends and the City of Clifton in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community of the Honorable Lester F. Herrschaft, Councilman for the City of Clifton.

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

**HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 1997*

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, on June 5, the fifth graders from Somerset Elementary School and the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless will present a symposium, "Wake Up Montgomery County!" It is with a great deal of pride that I honor this school, which has worked over the years to provide the homeless in Montgomery County with support and compassion. Led by the efforts of a remarkable fifth grade teacher, Ms. Vicky Fisk, every child that graduates from Somerset has a deep sense of community obligation and a better understanding of what it is like to spend the night on the street or in a shelter.

Ms. Fisk has been working with Montgomery County homeless shelters for 10 years. I would like to relay to you some of the experiences her students have had, for the most part in their own words. Their fifth grade year begins by researching and then writing essays, reports and papers about the homeless.

During our research, we learned that the main causes of homelessness are drugs, alcohol, mental illness and the working poor \* \* \* Working poor means that they have a job, but it doesn't pay them enough to rent a place to live \* \* \* Here is why you should not stop drug and alcohol education programs. If you did stop the programs the number of homeless will increase more than it does now every year.

We have raised money to buy coats for the children at Helping Hands Shelter. We then went to classrooms and informed students what we were going to do for the homeless \* \* \* We collected items from room to room for a month. We collected 1,200 items in a cart called "The Caring Cart." After four weeks went by, our class went to shelters giving out what we have collected \* \* \* Some of these items are toilet paper, laundry detergent, and deodorant \* \* \* It really helped the homeless.

Ms. Fisk's fifth grade does not stop there. They go on to challenge me and other Members of Congress to do more for the homeless. "What have you done?" they have asked me. "If you have a big speech about this, people will listen. [The homeless] need your support. They are American citizens, just as important as anyone. Did you know that there are more than 2,000 homeless people in Montgomery County alone? The homeless need your help."

I could not say it better. I have learned from the youngsters in Somerset Elementary School and I know that whomever stops in at their school at 5811 Warwick Place between 7 and 8:30 p.m. on June 5 will be very inspired.

A TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY HARPER  
ON HER SELECTION AS ONE OF  
PENNSYLVANIA'S BEST 50  
WOMEN IN BUSINESS

**HON. THOMAS M. FOGLIETTA**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 1997*

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Beverly Harper of Philadelphia. Ms. Harper was recently named one of Pennsylvania's Best 50 Women in Business, an honor she rightly deserves for her business savvy and her contributions to the community. One of two thousand nominees for the honor, Harper was nominated by the Ben Franklin Technology Center of southeastern Pennsylvania. Candidates were required to be owners, presidents, CEO's, or in a position with significant authority in the decisionmaking of the business. Ms. Harper certainly meets these standards as the founder and president of Portfolio Associates, Inc., a firm that specializes in public relations, advertising, marketing, and market research.

Since its founding in 1969, Portfolio Associates has handled numerous big-name accounts, including: Southeastern Pennsylvania Public Transportation Authority [SEPTA], University of Pennsylvania Health System, Philadelphia Gas Works, and the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, among others.

In addition to her successes in the business world, Beverly Harper is active in community organizations and is a supporter of the arts in Philadelphia. She spearheaded Greek Row, a movement to help Greek organizations develop a Panhellenic center and spur development in the distressed neighborhoods of North Philadelphia. Ms. Harper and her staff have regularly participated in career days at local schools, and have made a practice of adopting a school or family struggling with hardship, in an effort to enhance educational opportunities and improve self-esteem in low-income neighborhoods.

Ms. Harper is a member of the Community Trust Board of the West Philadelphia Empowerment Zone and is on the board of directors at the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia Dance Co. Mr. Speaker, in light of her many contributions to the city of Philadelphia, and in recognition of her recent inclusion in the list of Pennsylvania's top businesswomen, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Beverly A. Harper.

COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL  
CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN  
OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

**HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 1997*

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, thousands of optometrists from across the nation will convene in my hometown of St. Louis, June 11-15, for the Centennial Congress of the American Optometric Association [AOA]. It is fitting that this milestone event be held in St. Louis because it has been the home of the AOA since 1953.