

sergeant in Germany and France. He was awarded two Bronze Star medals for valor at Normandy and in central Europe.

Mr. O'Neil is survived by his wife of 51 years, Erika; sons, Edward of Brunswick and Kevin of Lakewood; and two grandsons.

He will be missed.

IN COMMEMORATION OF NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, far too often, the criminals who terrorize our society are glorified through massive media attention, while the rights of the victims and the general public who are made to suffer and live in fear are virtually ignored. While the rights of these destructive individuals are scrupulously and vigilantly guarded, the rights of those whose lives they devastate fall by the wayside.

This travesty is the focus of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which falls this year on April 13–19. During this week, organizations such as the Capital District Coalition for Crime Victims' Rights, are focusing their efforts on bringing maximum public attention to the many trials and tribulations faced by the victims of crime in America. On April 14, the Capital District Coalition dedicated a plaque at the site of a tree planted last year in commemoration of all the victims and survivors of crime in Saratoga County, NY, in my congressional district. Events such as this are critical in the effort to raise awareness of the impact of crime on its victims and their families. I sympathize immensely with the heartbreak suffered by those whose lives are permanently altered by the devastating effects of crime, and who then must sit by while they are often either ignored or victimized even more by the justice system. We in Congress are trying to do our part to remedy this shameful situation by enacting legislation such as the Victims' Rights Act of 1995, but it is the tireless efforts of individuals and organizations who devote countless amounts of their time and effort that will ensure that the crisis in victims' rights takes its rightful place at the forefront of the media's attention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to rise in recognition of National Crime Victims' Awareness Week. Hopefully, through this designation and the work of crime victims' rights organizations nationwide, victims of crime in America will receive the respect and consideration to which they and their rights are entitled.

BYE-BYE NATO

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Friedman, the respected international affairs columnist for the New York Times, has written an excellent column questioning the wisdom of the expansion of NATO.

He raises important concerns about whether or not the expansion of NATO will, in fact, di-

lute it, making it less likely that NATO will serve as an effective military instrument to defend any of the countries under its umbrella.

It is a sobering article and I urge every member of the administration to heed the concerns raised by Mr. Friedman:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 14, 1997]

BYE-BYE NATO

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

BRUSSELS.—Some enterprising Russian p.r. experts recently visited NATO headquarters and suggested a novel way to ease tensions between an expanding NATO and Russia: Just change NATO's name, the Russians suggested, because NATO is a four-letter word for Russians. So how about calling it TO-MATO (Trans-Oceanic Military Alliance and Treaty Organization), or POTATO (Peace Organization for Trans-Atlantic Ties and Operations), or maybe VODCA (Vanguard Organization for Defense, Cooperation and Assistance)?

NATO's savvy boss, Javier Solana, laughed off the Russian proposal. But discussions with officials here left me convinced that if NATO goes ahead with its expansion, just about everything other than its name will be changing—and that's too bad. I rather liked NATO the way it was—a tightly knit group of like-minded democracies capable of taking on any military foe in the world. Everyone is assuming that NATO can expand and keep that focused identity. Don't believe it. The real truth is NATO is now locked on a path of expansion that will dilute its power every bit as much as baseball expansion diluted Major League Pitching and made every 90-pound weakling a home-run threat.

It didn't have to be this way. NATO has always had two core functions. One was defense management—the commitment by each member to defend the others in the event of attack. The other was peace management—the commitment by NATO's 16 members to share their defense plans and budgets so that everyone knew what his neighbor was up to. Mutual defense kept peace between NATO and Russia and peace management kept peace among NATO's 16 members.

The question NATO asked itself after the cold war was: How do we preserve our defense strength while expanding our peace management capabilities to stabilize newly liberated Central Europe? It came up with a solid idea: Partnership for Peace. P.F.P. was a junior NATO in which 27 non-NATO European states—including Russia—engaged in joint exercises, sent ambassadors to NATO, were educated on NATO standards, discussed problems and participated with NATO in peacekeeping in Bosnia. The one thing P.F.P. members didn't get was NATO's commitment to mutual defense, which was confined to the core 16. The beauty of P.F.P. was that it preserved NATO's core strength while creating a framework to fill the power vacuum in Central Europe—without threatening Russia or setting up a competition over who gets into NATO and who doesn't.

So what happened? Unfortunately, in 1996 the Clinton team abandoned P.F.P. in favor of expanding NATO's core members. It was a clinical effort to attract votes from Polish, Czech and Hungarian Americans by promising their motherlands membership. This silly decision set NATO on a slippery slope to who knows where.

NATO now has three options. One is that it eventually expands to Russia's border, including the Baltic states Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. If that happens, it will be the end of NATO as a mutual defense alliance because there's no way the U.S. Army is going to guarantee the Estonia-Russia border. In this scenario NATO becomes just a mini-U.N.

Or as a senior NATO military officer told me: "The more nations that come in, the more NATO becomes just a collective security organization, in which members watch each other—not a collective defense group against a common enemy. That's not the NATO we have now."

Scenario 2 is that NATO doesn't expand beyond Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and tries to maintain its current defense and peace management functions, with just three new members. But then we'll have a permanent gray zone of states between NATO and Russia. The states left out will fight to get in and Russia will fight to keep them out.

Scenario 3, the one the White House is counting on, is that NATO begins to expand now but simultaneously deepens NATO-Russia cooperation and aid to Russia. This creates so many incentives for Moscow to be nice that NATO will be able to steadily creep toward the Russian border, and fill in the gray zone with new members, without alienating Moscow.

Which will it be? No one at NATO can tell you. In other words, NATO expansion is a swan dive into an unknown future. What a reckless way to deal with the most successful military alliance in history.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY TAX CREDIT ACT OF 1997

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce legislation to provide much-needed tax relief to America's middle class. Today—April 15—millions of Americans are putting their tax forms in the mail. Last year, the average American family paid 38 percent of their income taxes—Federal, State, and local taxes—to feed an ever hungry Government that demands more and more taxpayer dollars. Contrast this April 15 with April 15, 1947. Fifty years ago, Americans paid just 22 percent of their income in taxes.

My bill, the Family Tax Relief Act of 1997, would provide a \$500 per child family tax credit to every middle-class family with children under age 18. The Family Tax Relief Act of 1997 will cut the income tax burden of a family of four earning \$30,000 per year 51 percent, and the tax burden of a family earning \$40,000 by 30 percent. Families earning \$75,000 would see their tax burden reduced by 12 percent. The credit is for truly middle-class families—phaseouts begin to cut or eliminate the credit for families making over \$75,000. Fifty million children, from 28 million Americans families, are eligible for the credit. The credit eliminates the total tax burden for families making less than \$23,000.

In the last Congress this family tax credit was a part of the Balanced Budget Act that was vetoed by the President. The American people sent us to Washington with a clear mandate—reduce the crushing weight of taxes on everyday middle-class American households and cut spending.

But one key thing has been left out—middle-class tax relief. That is why I am introducing this legislation today. I believe that it is vitally important for Members of Congress to send a clear signal to all that middle-class tax relief will be an absolutely required component

of budget negotiations and any budget deal reached with the President.

It is time for the Congress to deliver on our promise and give tax relief to hard-working, overtaxed middle-class American families.

FORTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF TUNISIAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, in acknowledgment of the 41st anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Tunisia, I wish to help commemorate March 20, 1997 as an historic day of celebration for the people of Tunisia. This year is particularly important, as Tunisia will be commemorating the bicentennial of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation that was signed on August 28, 1797.

Tunisia has taken bold steps toward a more democratic system of government by broadening political debate, advancing social programs, developing economic programs encouraging privatization of the banking and financial sectors, and improving the quality of life for the people of Tunisia, in spite of instability emanating from neighboring countries. Further, Tunisia has acted as leader and catalyst for peacekeeping missions in suffering countries, contributing military contingents to operations in Cambodia, Somalia, the Western Sahara and Rwanda. Tunisia has been a voice of moderation in the Arab-Israeli peace process had has called for greater international efforts to fight terrorism.

Tunisia has, and continues to be a success story in a very volatile region of the world. I am pleased and proud to witness stronger relations between the U.S. and Tunisia. I have had the fortunate opportunity to spend time with Tunisia's Ambassador, His Excellency Azouz Ennifar, and have the strong impression that Tunisia is emerging as a healthy, independent and politically secure country. I encourage and support continued commitment and cooperation between our two countries and urge my colleagues to take this occasion to salute the Tunisian Government and its people.

COMMEMORATION OF VENTURA COUNTY CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS WEEK

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commemorate the week of April 14 through April 20 as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Week" in Ventura County, CA.

Through the unwavering dedication of Steven Firestein and the American Cancer Fund for Children, which he founded, the lives of countless children suffering from cancer have been touched. This organization has brought the issue of childhood cancer in the United States to the forefront and heightened community involvement in social services to families in need.

Each year, approximately 10,000 children in the United States are diagnosed with cancer, the leading cause of death by disease among children in this country. Incited to action by these staggering numbers, the American Cancer Fund for Children has not only worked to heighten awareness, but to provide financial assistance for medical procedures, food, clothing, transportation, prosthetic devices and social service programs to young people in treatment at hospitals throughout Los Angeles County and serving residents of Ventura County.

The American Cancer Fund for Children has accepted the challenge of meeting the demand for patient and family services to help promote the chances of survival. These services provide a variety of patient psycho-social services designed to foster self-esteem, encourage peer interaction, and develop special patient communication.

I would especially like to thank Steven Firestein who, out of the death of his friend, began his mission to improve the lives of other children stricken with cancer. From this personal tragedy rose an array of services and programs to assist childhood victims of cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the outstanding efforts of the American Cancer Fund for Children in conjunction with Ventura County during Childhood Cancer Awareness Week.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB OF CLIFTON

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the momentous occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of Boys' and Girls' Club of Clifton, NJ.

Founded in 1947, the Boys' Club of Clifton provided recreational activity opportunities to young men in the community. These recreational programs were held after-class hours in the local school until 1958, when the current building on Clifton Avenue was opened and became a center for the children in town.

In 1966, the Girls' Club was founded to provide similar recreational activity opportunities for young women in the community and in 1979, the Girls' Club initiated Clifton's first after-school day-care program for 30 children.

Since 1986, the two clubs consolidated, becoming the Boys' and Girls' Club of Clifton, Inc. The Boys' and Girls' Club still occupies the Clifton Avenue building, but over the years additions to the building were constructed to house the executive offices and the teen program. An adjacent building contains the pre-school area and a recreational facility.

The current facilities are right now at maximum capacity as they serve approximately 1,400 children from Clifton and the surrounding communities at any given time, and provide services to more than 2,000 children yearly. After several years of exploring various expansion options, the Club's Board of Trustees finally settled on plans to add an addition that will connect the existing buildings as well as extensively renovating the facilities now in use.

The new addition will house a modern pool, learning center, computer room, counseling area, and offices. The renovations will allow for the Boys' and Girls' Club to redesign their current program space to provide new program areas and make the entire facility accessible for handicapped and senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, the members of the Boys' and Girls' Club of Clifton, and the city of Clifton, in recognizing the momentous occasion of the 50th anniversary founding of the Boys' and Girls' Club of Clifton, Inc., as they commemorate the founding with a groundbreaking celebration on Sunday, April 6, 1997.

IN RECOGNITION OF STATE ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor State Road Elementary School of Parma, OH, on its 75th anniversary. State Road Elementary has been the starting place for thousands of proud, educated and involved Parmanians. They have grown to become leaders in their unions, respected members of their churches and capable and loving parents.

State Road Elementary began humbly as a small school. But it grew with the neighborhood. It fit in with the neighborhood's character. State Road Elementary is located in a neighborhood where family values are strong. These are families that work hard at their jobs, support one another, look out for one another and stand up for what is right. State Road Elementary prepared children to be active and upstanding members of their community.

For three-quarters of a century, this Parma neighborhood has sent its daughters and sons to start their education at State Road Elementary. I see no reason not to think that another four generations of families will be able to count on State Road Elementary for a healthy start and a head start for their children.

EXPEDITED RESCISSIONS ACT OF 1997—AN EFFECTIVE AND CON- STITUTIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE DISCREDITED LINE-ITEM VETO ACT

HON. DAVID E. SKAGGS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, today I am joining three other Members in introducing a bill to give the President and Congress new, effective—and constitutional—powers to weed out wasteful Government spending.

This bipartisan approach, the "Expedited Rescissions Act of 1997," is being cosponsored by the gentlewoman from New Jersey, MARGE ROUKEMA; the ranking Democrat on the Budget Committee, JOHN M. SPRATT, Jr.; and CHARLES W. STENHOLM, a long-time leader in the fight for a balanced budget. I am very pleased to have their support for this measure.

We all know that sometimes a large appropriations bill includes an item that could never