

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## REPUBLIC OF GABON DELEGATION VISIT

### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that during the week of July 12 through 16, the Congress was privileged to have a delegation from the National Assembly of the Republic of Gabon visit with members of both the House and Senate. The delegation was headed by President Guy Nzouba-Ndama and included members of the opposition party. It was the hope of this delegation that this visit would strengthen their understanding of democracy and political leadership in the U.S. and strengthen ties between their National Assembly and our Congress. It is by coincidence that the delegation was here in Washington during our consideration of the Africa Trade Bill. As many members suggested during the debate on this legislation, it's time that we take another look at our policies toward Africa.

The Republic of Gabon is a good example of the changes occurring across Africa. The Republic of Gabon achieved its independence in 1960 and became a democratic republic with three branches of government; the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. President Omar Bongo became the leader of Gabon following the death of President Leon Mba, Gabon's first president, in 1963 and has served as President since that time. After the 1993 election, political parties supporting the President and the major opposition parties negotiated the "Paris Accords" in October 1994. These agreements included reforms to amend electoral procedures, inclusion of opposition leaders in government, and assurances of greater respect for human rights. In July 1995, the Paris Accords were approved by a national referendum. President Bongo was re-elected to a seven-year term in December of 1998.

The National Assembly of Gabon is composed of 120 members and is elected by direct popular vote to serve a five-year term. The first multiparty elections were held in 1991 and the former ruling party, the Gabonese Democratic Party (GDP), retained a large majority in the National Assembly. In the 1996 elections, the PDG secured 100 of the 120 seats. The Senate's 91 members were last elected in 1997.

The Gabonese government and its leadership have taken important strides in implementing a populist democracy. Gabon is also fortunate to have a high level of prosperity and is developing an expanded middle class. President Bongo, with the assistance and cooperation of legislative leaders, is taking strides to increase economic opportunity for the Gabonese people by privatizing state-owned industries and improving the countries infrastructure.

We support the efforts the Gabonese government and its leadership has undertaken to

increase their knowledge of the democratic process as practiced in the United States. We also encourage the Gabonese political leadership to continue its positive strides and understand that true democracy does not occur overnight. We also understand that an expanded middle class and economic development are important elements of a vibrant democracy. I look forward to building and expanding our nation's ties to Gabon. We should do everything in our power to ensure this nation's continued growth.

## THE SOUTHWEST DEFENSE COMPLEX AND MILITARY SUPERIORITY

### HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I hope our House colleagues will support the Southwest Defense Complex, a proposal to consolidate defense research, development, testing, evaluation, and training in the Southwest United States. This proposal would link as many as 12 bases in 5 states (California, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and Arizona) to work to ensure our armed forces' technical superiority. Moreover, at a time of diminishing defense budgets, we must enhance the performance of military weaponry at lower costs. The consolidation of defense resources made possible by the Complex will help the Department of Defense achieve optimum use of its facilities.

The threats to our national security around the world are rapidly changing, unpredictable, but extremely dangerous. Americans in uniform are clearly going to need accurate and secure information systems, and high impact weapons with extreme precision. We need to develop new systems to meet the challenges of warfare in the 21st century to remain the best military in the world. Yet, conflicting demands and competing interests for dwindling defense dollars has spurred inefficiencies in military research, development, training, and evaluation that threaten our long-term combat readiness. The Complex proposal offers a strategy of consolidation that is cost-effective and affordable and most important, allows us to redirect needed funds to military needs.

The objective of the Southwest Defense Complex is to remedy the inefficiencies that hinder Department of Defense research, development, testing, and evaluation programs from strengthening our military superiority. The Department of Defense currently spends \$80 billion annually to maintain an inefficient defense logistic infrastructure. Each service maintains facilities that are expensive and perform redundant capabilities with little regard for cost-efficient coordinated investment.

Underutilized and non-competitive infrastructure must be eliminated if we are to get the maximum value for our defense dollars. We must equip our soldiers with the right equip-

ment to protect our national security and deter any potential threats. It is our research and training infrastructure that ensures that our armed forces are strong.

The advantages of the Southwest Defense Complex are numerous. First, bases in the Southwest United States are already becoming electronically linked and a number of them cooperate in solving problems and using facilities. In fact, western research and training facilities are already cooperating on sharing optical sensors between the Navy and Air Force for aircraft tracking devices, testing the weaponry of the F-15 at Edwards Air Force Base against drones at the Navy's Pt. Mugu range, and developing the Global Positioning Systems with shared information from all western facilities. Second, it is the only area in the U.S. where advanced technology can be used and tested in a realistic, high fidelity environment with minimal impact upon the general population. Third, the area provides ideal weather conditions for testing and training operations largely free of commercial activity. Fourth, the Southwest provides the physical space necessary for the testing and training that uses advanced technology. It is a region that offers 335 million acres of federally owned land. Over 490 thousand square miles of air space; and 484 thousand square miles of sea that can be used for training personnel. No other area in the country can offer these benefits.

The Southwest is a critical area to develop a stronger defense for our nation. The coordination of western facilities can allow for an effective and streamlined system to replace the status quo. The land, air and sea ranges available in the west will permit new technology to be developed, tested in the field, improved in the lab, and evaluated in a combat simulated environment. The most cost-effective way to test and adapt commercial technology for military purposes is to have facilities in the vicinity of where the field tests were held.

The Department of Defense has taken the first step in changing the way it researches, develops, and tests new technologies and trains personnel with the recommendation of the Western Test Range Command. The next step should be creation of the Southwest Defense Complex. Such a complex can provide long-term solutions to current military inefficiencies to develop, test, and deploy new weapon systems. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Southwest Defense Complex to strengthen our national security in the future.

## HONORING JONELLE SUZANNE GARO

### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jonelle Suzanne Garo, recently

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

ordained Associate Pastor for Christian Education at California's Oldest Armenian Church.

The Presbytery of San Joaquin also ordained Jonelle Suzanne Garo, M.Div. as a Minister of the World and Sacraments on Sunday, June 13.

A native of Fresno, Garo received her early education at Carroll Baird Elementary School, Tenaya Middle School, and Bullard High School, where she lettered in varsity soccer and softball. She matriculated at California State University, Fresno for 2 years, reported for the Armenian Studies Newspaper, and played on the CSUF Women's Club Soccer Team.

In 1990, Garo transferred to Westmont College in Santa Barbara and earned a bachelor of arts degree in sociology 2 years later. She worked here way through undergraduate school as a nanny for actress Jane Seymour, construction worker, retail associate sales, and food service/catering assistant, among other things.

In 1994, Garo was admitted to Princeton Theological Seminary, the oldest Presbyterian graduate school in America. During her course of study, Garo was a member of the Theological Students Fellowship and cochaired the Charles Hodge Society and Friday Night Fellowship. She served as a ministry intern at the Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church of Havertown, Pennsylvania and as a chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania and as a chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center.

Garo conducted youth ministries in New England and Canada under the auspices of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America. She also engaged in missions work in the inner city of Newark and in the Republics of Mexico and Armenia. Upon her graduation in 1997, Garo undertook a 1-year Christian Education internship/practicum at her childhood church, the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno.

Garo is the daughter of Philip and Elaine (Karabian) Garo of Fresno, married Kalem Kazarian of Fowler, CA, on July 24, 1999.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jonelle Suzanne Garo Kazarian for her accomplishments as an ordained associate pastor for Christian Education in the oldest Armenian church. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Ms. Garo many more years of continued success.

#### TRIBUTE TO CITIZENS AGAINST LAWSUIT ABUSE

#### HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of California's 49th Congressional District, I would like to recognize the efforts of the 6,700 members of San Diego's Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse organization in promoting California's fourth "Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week" from September 20–24, 1999.

Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse (CALA) is a respected and effective organization that works to educate consumers about the human and financial costs associated with frivolous lawsuits. This organization has led successful efforts to protect MICRA (the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act) in the State of

California, to limit the liability of Y2K lawsuits, and to inform the public of the true threats of lawsuit abuse which burden our local economy.

CALA in San Diego is recognized locally for their distinctive billboard signs, "Gavel of Justice" cable network program, and for providing crucial educational information exposing the true financial effects that lawsuits have upon each and every one of us—in the pocketbook through higher insurance and medical charges.

I support CALA in their efforts to secure support for civil justice reform. I have been delighted to work with CALA in the past, and look forward to working with them in the future.

Mr. Speaker, CALA should be commended during this important "Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week".

#### IN HONOR OF ROBERT F. BUSBEY

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Robert F. Busbey and in recognition of Cleveland State University naming their natatorium the Robert F. Busbey Natatorium on October 2, 1999. I am honored to have been invited to this dedication ceremony.

Beginning with his enrollment in 1946 to Fenn College, later Cleveland State University, Robert F. "Bob" Busbey has contributed more to the history of Cleveland State athletics than any other single individual. As a four-sport athlete (swimming, baseball, track, and fencing), he was Fenn College's first All-American and achieved this honor in both 1948 and 1949.

After graduation, Mr. Busbey served as the head swimming coach at Cleveland State for 30 years. During his coaching tenure, Mr. Busbey was named the assistant swimming coach for the 1964 U.S. Olympic Team, served as chairman of the NCAA Swimming Committee, served as Cleveland State's athletics director, and was responsible for bringing five NCAA swimming championships to the Cleveland State natatorium.

Robert Busbey's accomplishments led to his receiving the 1982 National Collegiate and Scholastic Swimming Trophy, one of the sport's highest awards. Mr. Busbey served as the athletic director until 1990, developing a program of 18 intercollegiate sports and was a prime force in the planning and building of CSU's Physical Education Building, housing the world class natatorium. After serving as Cleveland State's Director of Athletics, Mr. Busbey served as the associate vice president for athletic affairs until his retirement in 1994. In recognition of his outstanding athletic legacy and generous support, Cleveland State University is honoring him by naming the natatorium the Robert F. Busbey Natatorium.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mr. Busbey on his many accomplishments and commemorate him for his continuous support of Cleveland State University.

#### TRIBUTE TO EMILIO TORRES

#### HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincerest congratulations to Mr. Emilio Torres of San Antonio, TX, upon his retirement after 51 years of Federal Government service.

Mr. Torres began serving his country on May 4, 1948, with a tour of duty in the U.S. Navy. After his service with the Navy, Mr. Torres spent his remaining years of Federal Government service at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio. Throughout those years of service, Mr. Torres held positions in Kelly Flight Test and in the Quality Assurance Division of the Directorate of Maintenance. Mr. Torres also served as chief of the Quality Evaluation Team and as chief of Administration Services for the Directorate of Maintenance. In addition, Mr. Torres was assigned to the San Antonio-Air Logistics Center as a special projects officer.

As an artist, Mr. Torres has made a number of significant contributions to Kelly Air Force Base. Mr. Torres is the designer of the Veteran's Monument at Kelly Air Force Base, and his efforts were instrumental in establishing the Kelly Air Force Base Heritage Museum. Mr. Torres has also received wide recognition and acclaim for his historical cartoon depiction of Kelly Air Force Base, a piece which appeared in the San Antonio Express News, the San Antonio Light, and the Kelly Observer.

Mr. Torres' artistic contributions have been recognized by the city of San Antonio, and his works have been presented to many distinguished officials including the Pope, the Queen of England, the King of Spain, all U.S. Presidents beginning with President Kennedy, and a number of secretaries of the Air Force, Governors, State senators, and other visiting dignitaries.

In his final duty for the Federal Government, Mr. Torres has been assigned to the San Antonio-Air Logistics Center Commander's Action Group. In this capacity, Mr. Torres manages the special projects function which aids the commander in support of distinguished visitors, briefings, tours, displays, and orientations.

The efforts of Emilio Torres merit recognition, not only for his years of dedicated service, but also for the indelible imprint that his artistic works have left on the San Antonio community.

#### A TRIBUTE TO BILL ROLEN

#### HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 21, 1999*

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I inform my colleagues of the recent death of John William "Bill" Rolen on September 14, 1999.

Bill is perhaps best known for his outstanding advocacy on behalf of our Nation's former prisoners of war. Since March 1994, Bill served as the Executive Director of the American Ex-Prisoners of War. In this important position, with outstanding support from his