

42 years. Following his retirement, he is continuing in his professional capacity as a consulting engineer for New Jersey Porcelain Company and Lenape Products Company in Trenton, NJ.

Mr. Mandel is a member of the New Jersey Ceramic Association, the Highland Park Committee on Aging and the Rutgers Alumni Association. Married to the former Gussie Siegel for over 58 years, they are the proud parents of three children and four grandchildren. Dr. Matthew Mandel, an endodontist, is married to Lynn and the father of Alexander. Their daughter, Madeline Crass, a school teacher, is the mother of Scott. Robert Mandel, a businessman, married to Rayne, is the father of Levi and Benjamin.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN N. HOSTETTLER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. HOSTETTLER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 50, I was on official Congressional business in Russia, and could not be present. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on this vote to pass H.R. 819.

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING IN ARGENTINA

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, few Americans would associate Latin America with Middle East terrorism; however, the reality is that we do have Middle East terrorist activity in our very own backyard. Not long ago, I led a congressional delegation to South America, and many Members learned for the first time of Hizbollah's active presence developing funding support and other bases of operations for its international terrorist goals.

Sadly, today is the seventh anniversary of the 1992 terrorist bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. That cowardly, deadly terrorist attack took 29 lives, and injured more than 200. It has been seven years since this savage and ruthless act of terror, directed against Jewish targets in Argentina, caused the murder of these innocent victims. It destroyed the diplomatic mission of the state of Israel, plunged the largest Jewish community in South America into perpetual fear, and threatened the civilized world. In fact, this horror was compounded two years later when the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires was destroyed by a terrorist car bomb.

Both of these brutal crimes have remained unsolved. After years of investigation, little substantive progress has been made in apprehending those responsible. Accordingly, I urge the Argentinean government to vigorously continue to pursue those investigations.

Relatives of the 29 victims of the Israeli Embassy bombing, including Ralph and Helen Goldman, American citizens in New York, who lost their son David Ben Rafael in the attack,

will never reclaim their loved ones, or recover from this tragic loss. Our hearts are with the Goldmans and with the other families as we memorialize their children, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, who were killed in these bombings. The entire civilized world has been brutalized. With each act of terror, freedom and liberty suffers defeat. With every act of terrorism left unsolved, democracy and justice are diminished.

The United States remains in the forefront in the war against terrorism. We implore the international community to join in this battle. We urge Argentina to uphold global standard against international terrorism and help solve these crimes which claimed the lives of so many in the Jewish community.

We pay tribute to the victims of the Israeli Embassy and AMIA bombings. They will not be forgotten. Together we can best honor their memory by solving the crimes which claimed their lives, bringing their murders to justice, and creating an environment which assures that terror will not claim any additional victims. The U.S. has provided assistance and support to the government of Argentina in that effort.

A Jewish tradition states, "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue." This is an American ideal as well as a universal humanitarian imperative.

HONORING COLORADO GIRLS STATE BASKETBALL 2A CHAMPIONS— FOWLER HIGH SCHOOL

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my heartiest congratulations to the Fowler High School girls basketball team on their impressive Colorado State 2A Championship. The victory, a 57-43 win over Swink High School, was a superb contest between two talented and deserving teams. In championship competition, though, one team must emerge victorious, and Fowler proved themselves the best in their class—truly second to none.

The State 2A Championship is the highest achievement in high school basketball. This coveted trophy symbolizes more than just the team and its coach, Greg Fruhwirth, as it also represents the staunch support of the players' families, fellow students, school personnel, and the community. From now on, these people can point to the 1998-1999 girls basketball team with pride, and know they were part of a remarkable athletic endeavor. Indeed, visitors to this town and school will see a sign proclaiming the Girls State 2A Championship, and know something special had taken place there.

The Fowler basketball squad is a testament to the old adage that the team wins games, not individuals. The combined talents of these players coalesced into a dynamic and dominant basketball force. Each team member also deserves to be proud of her own role. These individuals are the kind of people who lead by example and serve as role-models. With the increasing popularity of sports among young people, local athletes are heroes to the youth in their home towns. I admire the discipline and dedication these high schoolers have shown in successfully pursuing their dream.

The memories of this storied year will last a lifetime. I encourage all involved, but especially the Fowler players, to build on this experience by dreaming bigger dreams and achieving greater successes. I offer my best wishes to this team as they move forward from their State 2A Championship to future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING MEHER CHEKERDEMIAN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Meher Chekerdeman on receiving the Third Annual Armenian Education Foundation's Educator of the Year Award. Mr. Chekerdeman has been an outstanding educator for many years.

The Armenian Educational Foundation (AEF) has a proud history of supporting educational causes. The AEF is on a journey to recognize the fine educators who have preformed above and beyond the call of duty, and have contributed immensely to the betterment and quality of life for Armenian students. The role that an educator plays is of critical importance to the future.

Meher Chekerdeman has spent 32 years with Fresno Unified School District as a teacher, counselor, vice-principal, and principal. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in Social Studies, a master of arts degree in Education from California State University, Fresno (CSUF) and various credentials and certificates. Currently Meher is the Executive Director of the Fresno Consolidated Charter, Association of California School Administrators and a part time faculty member at CSUF. He has been a member, vice-chair, and chairman of various education committees and councils and has served as Chairman of the Board of Regents of the Armenian Schools under the auspices of the Western Prelacy Armenian Apostolic Church. Meher is an active member of several Armenian organizations and has received many awards and honors from organizations such as the Fresno City Council PTA, Fresno City Youth Development Program, Armenian Community Schools of Fresno and Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church of Fresno.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Meher Chekerdeman on receiving the Armenian Educational Foundation's Educator of the Year Award. Meher has been an outstanding educator for many years. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Meher Chekerdeman many years of continued success.

IN HONOR OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greek Independence Day, March 25th.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman Empire brought a halt to the important leadership role of Greeks. Their heritage

remained important, however, for others around the world. Tsarist Russia emulated the Orthodox and imperial models of Byzantium. Classical Greece offered inspiration and guideposts for the flowering of the Renaissance. And the influence of Classical Greece on the founding fathers of American independence is universally known.

During the rule of the Ottoman Empire, the Greek people never lost sight of their distinct identity and deep devotion to their Orthodox Church, whose clergy played a critical function in maintaining their language and religion. As the eighteenth century ended, the Greeks began organizing a struggle for their freedom. On March 25, 1821, Bishop Germanos called for all to join the campaign for Greek independence. Despite overwhelming odds, thousands of Greeks throughout the region responded to this inspiring call and fought heroically.

The combination of Greek sacrifice and bravery with the help of foreign volunteers succeeded by the end of the 1820s in establishing an independent Greek state. It was a struggle that caught the world's attention, in large part because of the admirable ideals of freedom and revived opportunities for a heroic peoples. We cherish and honor these same ideals today. The Greek-American community offers a cultural bridge between the two countries and takes pride that Greek ideals contributed to America's revolution before Greeks themselves had the chance to follow a related and successful campaign for freedom.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in celebrating Greek Independence Day.

**CHIEF JIMMIE L. BROWN RETIRES
FROM MIAMI-DADE POLICE DE-
PARTMENT**

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to one of Miami-Dade County's finest, a man who has valiantly defended the streets of our cities for over thirty years, Miami-Dade County Police Chief Jimmie L. Brown.

A special celebration will soon be held in honor of Chief Brown's long devotion and commitment to defend and protect our South Florida streets. For the last 30 years, Chief Brown has served in law enforcement, his latest assignment being Chief of Special Investigations. He also serves as church pastor, radio show host, adjunct professor and consultant, always being instrumental and positively influential to many in the community. As a soldier in the U.S. Air Force, Chief Brown was awarded a Bronze Star and Air Force commendation medals for service in Vietnam.

General Robert R. Lee once said, "duty is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more. You should never wish to do less." These words embody the kind of exemplary life that Chief Brown conducted as he always lived a life of sacrifice and service.

Chief Brown additionally volunteers his time and energy to a host of other community organizations and affiliations. Having received over 100 awards from professional and civic

groups, as well as having earned an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from International Seminary, Chief Brown will retire in April and will be missed greatly by all members and employees of the Miami-Dade Police Department.

FRIENDS OF IRELAND

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of St. Patrick's Day, I am inviting all my colleagues to become a Friend of Ireland. The Friends of Ireland is a bipartisan Congressional organization established in 1981 by the late Speaker, Thomas "Tip" O'Neill. Every successive Speaker has carried on the tradition with Speaker HASTERT and Minority Leader GEPHARDT serving as honorary Chairmen of the group.

The purpose of the Friends of Ireland is to increase the bonds of friendship and understanding between the American people and the people of Ireland. We look for a peaceful solution to the problems of this troubled land. Our organization is open to all members of the 106th Congress who share its principles and has attracted widespread support over the years. There are also several Senators who are members of the Friends.

Over the years, the statements of support for peace in Ireland, condemnations of human rights abuses, assistance to the International Fund for Ireland and general expressions of goodwill have made a difference. The voice of the United States Congress is listened to very attentively in Ireland both in the Republic and in the North.

I would like to share with you this year's St. Patrick's Day Statement:

STATEMENT BY THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND ST.
PATRICK'S DAY 1999

On this St. Patrick's Day 1999, the friends of Ireland in the United States Congress join with the 44 million Americans of Irish ancestry in commemorating an extraordinary year for the people of the island of Ireland. We are proud of the dramatic progress achieved in last year's Good Friday Agreement. We commend those who contributed to this historic agreement.

The Agreement is a unique opportunity to end a tragic conflict which has caused needless tragedy and destruction. It holds out the promise of a new beginning, honorable and realistic, for all involved. The Agreement was endorsed decisively by the people in both parts of the island of Ireland as a clear democratic mandate to their political leaders. We call on all those leaders to implement that mandate fully and fairly, and to embrace the opportunity for peace offered by the Agreement with courage, imagination and empathy. History will not deal kindly with those who fail to do so.

We are pleased to welcome to Washington over the St. Patrick's Day period many of those who were central to the success of the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement. We particularly welcome the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, whose outstanding commitment and leadership, both during the negotiations, and in the succeeding months, have been deservedly recognized. We also pay tribute to Prime Minister Tony Blair, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam, Minister for Foreign Affairs David

Andrews, the leaders of the Northern Ireland political parties, and many other Irish and British Government officials for their courage and determination to reach agreement despite the opposition they faced.

We congratulate John Hume and David Trimble on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their efforts for peace. We take pride in the contribution made to the peace process by President Clinton and many other leaders in the United States. We especially salute our former colleague, Senator George Mitchell, for his indispensable leadership, and welcome the recent establishment by the U.S.-Ireland Alliance of the Mitchell Scholarships in his honor. We welcome the generous \$3 million contribution of the Irish Government to this scholarship fund, announced by the Taoiseach last September during our President's visit to Ireland. We also welcome the Irish Government's support of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, through a grant to promote the Festival of Irish Arts, in May 2000.

Ireland has given to America in many ways, including men to fight our battles from Revolutionary War to Desert Storm. In appreciation for these services, and as a special tribute to 12 Irish citizens who gave their lives as members of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Vietnam War, we are pleased to note that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's traveling wall, called the Wall that Heals, will be making a tour of Ireland from April 16 to May 3 this year.

This July, we look forward to welcoming the first 4,000 young men and women who will enter the United States under special visas provided by the Irish Peace Process and Cultural Training Program Act of 1998. The visa will allow these young adults from both communities an opportunity to experience America's unique blend of cultural diversity and economic prosperity. After their visit, they will return home providing the crucial skill base needed to attract private investment in their local economies. That Congress initiated and passed this visa legislation with unanimous support is evidence of our continuing bipartisan commitment to supporting the Good Friday Agreement.

We believe the most crucial task now facing the Irish and British Governments and all the political leaders in Northern Ireland is to build momentum for the full implementation of the Agreement. Inevitably, there will be continuing difficulties to surmount in resolving this deep and long-standing conflict. We believe the implementation of the Agreement offers the best way forward and the best yardstick to judge the policies and actions of those struggling to overcome these difficulties. We do not believe that the goals of the Agreement can be served by inaction or procrastination in implementing its provisions. Those who take political risks for the implementation of the Agreement can be assured of our consistent support.

Following last month's decision by the Assembly to approve the designation of the Northern Ireland Departments and the list of cross-border bodies, and the signing last week by the United Kingdom and Ireland of the historic treaties to set up the institutions, it is vital that this decision be implemented without delay. Progress in all of these areas is, of course, dependent on the establishment of the multi-party Executive, as provided in the Agreement. We are dismayed at the delay in establishing the Executive, and urge it be established as soon as possible. It is the best way to create conditions for progress on other difficult issues, including the problem of decommissioning.

The carnage inflicted on the town of Omagh last August was a grim reminder that, in spite of all that has been achieved,