

COMMENCING ISRAEL'S REDE-
PLOYMENT FROM SOUTHERN
LEBANON

SPEECH OF

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2000

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 331, and wish to commend the Government of Israel for its courageous decision to unilaterally withdraw its troops from Southern Lebanon.

As Israel demonstrates its willingness to take risks for peace in the Middle East, the international community must rise to its obligation to ensure that Southern Lebanon never again becomes a staging ground for attacks against Israel.

We must stand by Israel during these difficult times, recognize Israel's right to self defense found in Chapter 7, Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, and work toward peace for the citizens of Israel and all the Middle East.

PRESIDENT ARPAD GONCZ AC-
CEPTS ROOSEVELT INTER-
NATIONAL DISABILITY AWARD
FOR HUNGARY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 12, at a United Nations ceremony the President of the Republic of Hungary, Arpad Goncz, received the fourth annual Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award on behalf of his country. This award is sponsored by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the World Committee on Disability. United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, and the Vice Chairman of the National Organization on Disability, Christopher Reeve, were among those who presented the award to President Goncz.

Mr. Speaker, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award is presented annually to a nation that makes noteworthy national progress toward the full and equal participation of people with disabilities. This important international recognition was given to Hungary in recognition of the great improvements that Hungary has made on behalf of disabled individuals. Hungary's 1998 Rights of Persons Living with Disability and the Equality of Opportunity law defined the rights of this important segment of the population and raised national awareness of disability issues in the country. Hungary has made outstanding improvements by establishing educational programs for children with disabilities and incentives for employers who hire those with disabilities. In addition to these changes the Hungarian government actively promotes the development of disability support groups.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Mrs. Zsuzsa Goncz, the exceptionally talented wife of President Goncz, for her important role and her critical efforts in bringing about the positive steps that have been made by the government of Hungary to provide

equal opportunity for the disabled. President and Mrs. Goncz are figures of great integrity and have given important moral leadership to this effort. I am honored to have them as my friends.

Mr. Speaker, Secretary General Kofi Annan made the following statement commending Hungary for its receiving the Roosevelt Award: "The full and equal participation of people with disabilities is the main message of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. I commend the initiative of the Roosevelt Institute and the World Committee on Disability in establishing this award, and I heartily congratulate the Government of Hungary for its work to build a world in which each and every person can participate fully, actively and equally."

Alan Reich, Chairman of the World Committee on Disability also praised Hungary for its commitment to the U.N. World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons: "Proactive efforts such as Hungary's should inspire other countries throughout the world. There are Half a billion of us on our planet with disabilities. This crisis that demands action. We urge all nations to respond to the U.N.'s call as Hungary has."

Mr. Speaker, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Award, established in 1995 by the Roosevelt Institute and the World committee on Disability, consists of a bronze bust of Franklin Roosevelt and a \$50,000 grant for an outstanding disability program in the selected nation. Previous winners of this award are Ireland, the Republic of Korea, and Canada. President Roosevelt, for whom the award is named, contracted polio at the age of 39 and from that time on could not walk without assistance. Despite this serious disability he was elected President of the United States four times, lead the U.S. through the Great Depression and World War II, and was a founding father of the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador William J. vanden Heuvel, the Chairman of the Roosevelt Institute emphasized the role of the former President of the United States in dealing with disabilities: "President Roosevelt's role in the founding of the United Nations was one of his proudest accomplishments. It is wonderful to be in this institution more than 50 years later, celebrating progress in the rights of people with disabilities-progress that he would fully endorse as a person who lived with a significant disability for much of his life."

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Hungary and to Zsuzsa and Arpad Goncz on the occasion of Hungary's receiving the fourth annual Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award.

TRIBUTE TO ROY ORR

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a dear friend and a great public servant Roy Orr of DeSoto, Texas.

Roy has served his hometown of DeSoto in almost every capacity imaginable, and he has been elected to numerous public offices. First he was elected to the DeSoto Independent

School District Board of Trustees, then he served as mayor of DeSoto, and most recently he served as County Commissioner. Recently, Roy finished his term as Chairman and Charter Member of the DeSoto Economic Development Commission. To list all of the boards, commissions, civic and church related activities that Roy has been a part of would be impossible.

Recently, DeSoto's Mayor Richard Rozier and the City Council decided it was time to honor Roy Orr for his many years of service. Friday, June 2, 2000 will be declared Roy Orr Day in the City of DeSoto, and the linear trail system along DeSoto's Ten Mile Creek will be named the "Roy Orr Trail" in his honor.

I deeply regret that I will not be able to join Roy on this special occasion for him. Therefore, I want to thank him now for all he has done to make DeSoto the wonderful place it is today. Congratulations on these tremendous tributes Roy, they are richly deserved for a lifetime of service.

HONORING PICKENS MIDDLE
SCHOOL IN PICKENS, SOUTH
CAROLINA

HON. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Pickens Middle School in Pickens, South Carolina. This school has been recently named a 1999-2000 school year "Blue Ribbon School" by Secretary of Education, Richard Riley.

Since its inception in 1982, more than 3,800 of the most successful and challenging schools in the country have been honored by inclusion in the Blue Ribbons Schools Program. The schools chosen for this program fulfill stringent, research-based criteria for overall academic excellence. To be eligible to be a Blue Ribbon School, schools are judged in all areas of academics, instruction, professional development, and school curriculum. In addition, honored schools exhibit exceptional levels of community and parental involvement, high student achievement levels and rigorous safety and discipline programs within their schools.

Pickens Middle School was one of only four schools in South Carolina honored with this prestigious award this year. In fact, they were one of an elite 198 schools nationwide chosen for this honor for the 1999-2000 school year.

Pickens Middle School is an outstanding example of effective public school and is well deserving of this national award. Their parents, students, teachers, administrators, and school officials should all be proud for achieving this special honor. This school is a strong example of excellence in academics in the 3rd District of South Carolina and should serve as a model for schools across the country. I am proud to have this blue ribbon school in my district of South Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my fellow colleagues will join me in congratulating Pickens Middle schools for their commitment to educational excellence.

IN HONOR OF THE NEW JERSEY
ARYA SAMAJ MANDIR, INC., AND
ITS FIFTH ANNUAL COMMEMO-
RATIVE FLAG-RAISING CERE-
MONY

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the New Jersey Arya Samaj Mandir, Inc., and the fifth annual commemorative flag-raising ceremony in celebration of the 34th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Guyana.

This fine organization was incorporated in 1988 to promote Indian culture, while also assisting with the sometimes trying period of adjustment that immigrant families experience upon entering, settling, and residing in a foreign land. Arya Samaj Mandir, Inc., serves the educational, cultural, religious, and social needs of New Jersey's Arya and Hindu immigrants in a way that improves the quality of their American experience.

Guyana's independence is the primary reason for this flag-raising ceremony, and in honor of Guyana's Independence and its many years of struggle to realize that independence, it is important to provide overview of its history.

'Guyana' is an indigenous Indian word that means land of many waters. In 1622, the Dutch began colonizing Guyana and in 1640, the first group of slaves arrived. Following the 1763 Berbice Slave Rebellion, British captured the colony in 1781, were ousted a year later, and they returned in 1812. Laborers were brought from Portugal in 1935, from India in 1838, and from China in 1853.

Under universal suffrage, the first elections were held in 1953. The People's Progressive Party (PPP) won the election, but it was removed 133 days later by the British. The PPP was reelected in 1957 and again in 1961. In 1966, Guyana became an independent nation. However, corrupt elections led to 28 years of unpopular rule. It was not until 1992 that the Republic of Guyana held free and open elections. Today, the PPP-Civic government is in power under the Presidency of Dr. Cheddi Jagan.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the New Jersey Arya Samaj Mandir, Inc., and the fifth annual flag-raising ceremony in honor of Guyana's independence.

THE U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues excerpts of a speech recently delivered by the Vice President on the subject of the U.S.-Israel relationship and the situation in the Middle East region. I found the Vice President's remarks to be quite thoughtful and believe they would be of great use to members.

The Vice President made a number of especially important points. He stated that the United States can and should continue to

guarantee Israel's qualitative military edge. We all want to see peace in the Middle East. But without security, Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with hostile adversaries toward a resolution of age old differences.

I am pleased that the Vice President spoke of Israel's participation in international politics, and underscored his commitment to helping Israel achieve full and fair status at the United Nations.

The Vice President made it clear that he understands the importance of the U.S.-Israel friendship. He also pointed out that while we are close allies, and are supportive of the peace process, we must never pressure Israel to do anything it feels may compromise its security.

I am so pleased that Egypt and Jordan have entered into peace treaties with Israel. I join the Vice President in expressing hope for success with the Palestinian authorities. I agree with him that a final agreement between Israel and the Palestinians is possible. However, we must see as much resolve from Yassir Arafat and the Palestinian leadership toward that goal in order for it to be reality. Like many Israeli's, Syrians, and others around the world, I am disappointed that Syria has not taken advantage of the opportunities presented so far to negotiate in good faith toward a fair and lasting resolution to the issues the two nations face. I hope that President Assad will engage Israel again and commit to working through the challenges that remain in the way of peace between Israel and Syria.

The Vice President's words regarding Russian and Iran were encouraging, in that, he realizes that Russia must actively work to help reduce the threat Iran poses to the international community, to Israel, and to the U.S.

Finally, I join the Vice President and numerous other leaders in this nation and around the world in remaining committed to Israel's security now and in the future. Until the day comes that we witness peace between Israel and all of her neighbors, I will remain steadfast in my support for our great ally in the Middle East. I will always work to maintain a strong friendship and strategic alliance between our two nations.

REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE AIPAC ANNUAL POLICY CONFERENCE

"... Now, almost two decades later, the crowd is a little bigger, and the challenges before Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship have changed. But some things have not: our enduring support for a strong partnership between the United States and Israel; and our commitment to one of the cornerstones of America's national security—a strong, secure, peaceful, and prosperous State of Israel.

... Even when the world is upside down, the United States and Israel see eye-to-eye. Ben-Gurion may have had unorthodox ways of conducting diplomacy, but he was a modern-day prophet. He was part of a generation that believed it was their responsibility to make the centuries-long dream of a Jewish homeland a reality. He was one of the dreamers who believed that they could make the desert bloom. He was one of the warriors who never lost hope for peace. As Ben-Gurion wrote to a friend near the end of his life, "there is hope ... that peace is approaching, not quickly, but slowly, slowly ... and it appears to me that by the end of this century, the prophecy of Isaiah will be fulfilled."

I want to talk with you today about what we can do to achieve peace and security for

Israel, for our own country, and ultimately, throughout the world. In a speech three weeks ago in Boston, I laid out a vision for America's strength and role abroad. I believe we need to recognize that the classic security agenda—the question of war and peace between sovereign nations—is still with us during this new Global Age, in which the destinies of billions of people around the globe are increasingly intertwined.

We need to recognize that this Global Age presents us with a new set of threats—such as rogue nations or terrorist groups acquiring biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons—or merely the ability to disrupt our computer networks. Or the continued degradation of our environment which threatens the long-term security of all humanity. At the same time, this new age also presents us with new opportunities—for peace, and for economic growth.

... When we took office seven years ago, President Clinton and I decided that the United States needed to chart a new course with regard to the Middle East peace process. Unlike our immediate predecessors, we chose to get intimately involved. But we also established a firm, new rule—that we must not, and would not, in any way try to pressure Israel, to agree to measures that they themselves did not see were in their own best interests.

This commitment to Israel was not new for me. I stood against the efforts of the two previous administrations to pressure Israel to take stands against its own view of what was in Israel's best interests. In 1988, I took a strong stand against a previous administration's efforts to force Israel into concessions that would have threatened its security. And in 1991, I remember vividly standing up against a group of administration foreign policy advisors who promoted the insulting concept of "linkage," which tried to use loan guarantees as a stick to bully Israel. I stood with AIPAC, and together, we defeated them.

And incidentally, I have never and will never interfere in an Israeli election. But I certainly hope that all of you will be active in this upcoming American election because a lot is at stake.

Facilitating peace, not forcing it; standing by our friends, not against them—these have been the hallmarks of my approach for my entire career, and it will be my approach if I'm entrusted with the Presidency.

I will never, ever let people forget that the relationship between the United States and Israel rests on granite—on the rock of our common values, our common heritage, and our common dedication to freedom.

If, from time to time, we disagree, I will always work to make sure that we emerge even stronger—with a better understanding of each other's interests—so that we are always working to reinforce one another. I will never forget that Israel's security rests on its superiority in arms. That is why, two years ago, the United States and Israel established a new strategic partnership, ushering in an unprecedented level of military cooperation. I am absolutely committed to make sure that Israel's qualitative edge remains, and remains strong.

Our renewed partnership has brought historic progress over the past seven years. Last year, when we met, I told you I would work to end Israel's half-century of ostracism from the United Nations groupings of countries from which membership in the UN Security Council is drawn.

When I was last at the UN in January, I raised this issue with Secretary General Annan in a private meeting. I have continued to work on it, and I can report to you that we are closer than ever to seeing Israel finally, and proudly, take its rightful, equal