

51 in western Colorado. George Straface truly had a passion for education and it was evident in the effort he put forth. George dedicated nearly 20 years of his life to District 51, six of them acting as Superintendent. His presence will surely be missed.

George brought to the District an ability to balance all of the difficult tasks that are required of a superintendent. He did his job to the best of his ability and influenced all of the educators around him. His abilities to listen to and motivate people distinguished him in his leadership role. Not only was George able to accommodate the many needs of parents, teachers, and students, but also George's strong vision helped make the District a reputable model for others around the state.

Mr. Straface will continue his pursuit of furthering education as he has agreed to take the position of Head of Schools in Westminster, Colorado. I am sure that he will continue to put education as the first priority on his agenda and continue to encourage educators to assist students in furthering their learning endeavors. I wish him the best of luck and thank him for his dedicated effort.

REMARKS OF RABBI IRVING GREENBERG AT THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE COMMEMORATION

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, May 4, Members of Congress joined with representatives of the diplomatic corps, executive and judicial branch officials and hundreds of Holocaust survivors and their families to commemorate the Days of Remembrance in the Great Rotunda of the United States Capitol. The theme of this year's commemoration was "The Holocaust and the New Century: The Imperative to Remember."

Even after more than half a century, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we continue to commemorate the horrors of the Holocaust in order to honor the memory of those victims of Hitler's twisted tyranny. We must also mark this catastrophe because mankind still has not learned the lessons of this horror, as evidenced most recently by the mass killings in Kosovo.

Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Irving Greenberg, the newly designated Chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, delivered a moving address at this year's Day of Remembrance ceremony. Rabbi Greenberg was appointed Chair of the Holocaust Council on February 15 of this year. He previously served as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council's founding board from 1980 to 1988 and again as a member of the board since 1997. He is a pioneer of Holocaust remembrance and education in the United States and in the Jewish-Christian dialogue that has sought to revise theology in light of the Holocaust. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University, he is the President of the Jewish Life Network in New York, and from 1974 to 1997 he served as the founding President of the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. He also was executive director of President Jimmy Carter's Commission on the

Holocaust. He and his wife, Blu Grenauer Greenberg, have five children.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Rabbi Greenberg's excellent remarks at the Days of Remembrance ceremony in the Capitol be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give them thoughtful consideration.

RABBI IRVING GREENBERG'S REMARKS: DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE—MAY 4, 2000

"Behold I place before you today [for your choice] life and good, death and evil" (Deuteronomy 30:15)

And again: "I call heaven and earth to witness to you: [the choice of] life and death I have placed before you, the blessing and the curse; choose life so that you and your children may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19)

These biblical words are more than sacred scripture. They are the wisdom of living.

Every moment of living is a moment of choice. From the time we are born, we start to die. Unless we choose to live, unless we choose to love, to create children, to build society, then death will win out finally. No action is neutral. The next food we choose to eat is a choice of health and life or it is harmful and a choice of death. The next word we speak is a word of love, of healing, of encouragement and hope, or it is a word of stereotyping and degradation, of dismissal and death of the soul. The next act we do builds society and repairs the world; or, it is an act of vandalism, of environmental degradation, of breaking down the world and death.

As it is with individuals so it is with societies and nations. There are forces that can be deployed for human dignity and freedom and life or these same forces can be deployed to degrade and enslave, that is in the service of death.

Sixty to seventy years ago, in a tragic process we now call the Holocaust, nations and individuals made a series of decisions that in sum added up to the choice of death for millions and millions.

Panicked by economic depression and fear of social instability, millions of German voters chose to undermine democracy. They voted for a politician promising to restore them by removing the conflicts and risky choices of modern society, by concentrating power and by excluding foreigners and strangers and Jews. Thereby they unleashed a force of death. Fearful of making hard choices and of confronting an extremist, political leaders chose to make a pact with the devil and brought Adolf Hitler to power. Then legislators elected to go along with concentrating that power. Then the Nazis chose to suppress democracy, to crush the unions and the socialists and to exclude and isolate the Jews. Then jurists opted to go along with perverted justice and bureaucrats decided to classify and discriminate. These were all choices that brought death to power. These were the choices of death.

Two thousand years earlier, a great world religion had chosen to pursue its own encounter with God and salvation and its message of love. But those great people chose to express their spiritual liberation in the form of a religious monopoly and asserted that Christianity had superceded the mother religion, Judaism. This claim was followed by stereotyping and devaluation of the carriers of the ancestral religion, the Jews. Thereby Christians set the Jews up in isolation, as targets of hatred and stereotyping. In the 20th century, in the hands of new pagans, new secular racists, even anti-Christians, these attitudes were turned into lethal decisions to rain death and destruction on the Jews.

In the Holocaust, whole societies chose death. Generals in the German Army chose

to set up killing squads. Businesses competed to build gas chambers and crematoria and supply poison gas. Corporations elected to use slave labor and work people to death.

Democracies chose to close their doors to refugees and to remain indifferent and inactive in the face of the anguished cries for help of the victims. Hundreds of thousands of professionals and workers exercised their career choices to seek out and deliver Jews to their cruel fate. Millions of neighbors chose to remain silent or to look the other way or even to actively cooperate with despoliation and death.

Unchecked by counter choices, the forces of death and degradation always spread their focus. The Nazis set up a machinery of oppression so millions of Poles were enslaved and persecuted and whole cadres were seized and killed. Roma/Gypsies were rounded up and tens of thousands were killed. Millions of Russian POW's were starved and brutalized and executed.

Worldwide, Jewish leadership failed to grasp the enormity of the catastrophe and to risk all their standing to goad or dragoon the world into acting to save lives.

These were all choices of death. In a cascade of such choices, humanity abandoned millions of humans. Death reigned supreme and the forces of hatred killed and degraded millions.

After the war, banks chose to deny the survivors the return of their own bank accounts, and insurance companies rejected paying for life insurance policies they had issued. Others opted to reject responsibility for this catastrophe or for healing its survivors. Others choose to this day to deny that this tragedy even happened.

Thus in the 20th century, a realm of death was created. A decision to kill a whole people—every last person—was made by a government and six million Jews died in the Shoah. When humanity looked into the abyss and realized that it now had the power of technology and human nature had the capacity for evil to the point of unlimited murder and the death of life itself.

It would appear that the world failed to stop the triumph of death. But death and evil did not have the final word.

Then the survivors arose. They chose not to revenge, not to hate, not to give up in despair and go silently to the grave. They chose life. They chose to love, to marry, to have children, to make new lives in new places. The Jewish people arose and rebuilt its life; it created the State of Israel where 250,000 survivors and millions of refugees created themselves anew. Jewry took power to protect itself. Throughout the world, millions, then hundreds of millions learned the lesson: NEVER AGAIN should people of any religion, of any race or color, be vulnerable and dependent for their dignity on the arbitrary power of others. National liberation and the demand for self-determination spread worldwide. Then outsiders, and second-class citizens, and second-class genders and sexual orientations learned the lessons of the Holocaust and determined to be free and equal by right. They chose to work for a world where human dignity would be universal and human life supported by political/cultural/legal structures by right. And traditional groups shifted from passive acceptance to activity to insure that their values be heard and their dignity upheld.

For decades now, more and more people have awakened to the need to learn the lessons of this catastrophe. Out of love of life, they determined to preserve the memory of the victims, of their lives, of their dignity and courage in their struggle for existence, of their worlds that were destroyed. Thus they chose to reaffirm the value of life. More and more religions chose to confront the

tragic flaws which facilitated this catastrophe and moved to purify themselves. More and more Christians worldwide have studied the lessons, confessed the sins and determined to correct the teachings. Thereby Christianity chose life and love again and reasserted its own vitality as a gospel of love bringing healing to the world.

This process led the United States Government to establish a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on the national mall, and to establish Days of Remembrance in the very week of Yom Hashoah when the survivors and the victims' families devote their days to remembering. Millions of Americans—the vast majority not Jewish, not Poles or Gypsies or gays or any of the Nazis' victims whose story is told in the Museum—come there to confront the painful truth. Through this encounter, they learn how democracies fail, when governments turn indifferent, and by what process bureaucracy, technology, and obedience were turned into servants of death. Inwardly they pledge to work that this democracy shall not fail; that never again will this people stand by indifferently as millions of others are degraded or destroyed.

Each of these steps represents the choice of life.

Everywhere, people are coming to understand that the evil we have witnessed, this model of death and degradation cannot be ignored or even bypassed. Rather there must be an active response—nothing less than a mighty outburst of freedom, a choice to universalize human dignity for life. Worldwide, there is a frenzy of attempts to restore the human image of God that was defaced and destroyed. There are urgent efforts to clear up stereotypes in religion or culture that degrade others or may lead to indifference to their fate. There is a powerful thrust to develop pluralism in culture, in religion, in political process, in economic power—to prevent any concentration of power that could lead to a future choice of destruction or suppression of others.

Everywhere worldwide, these forces turn to the study of the Holocaust. Millions seek out encounter with its story and people because the encounter evokes the forces of love, compassion, human responsibility, the forces of life. Wherever people seek life, they draw strength from the bedrock of memory. Everywhere, humanity is driven by the goad to conscience which is intrinsic in Holocaust education.

Of course the forces of death are not quiescent. Out of fear of a changing world and the transformation of culture, intolerance reasserts itself. Forms of fundamentalism which deny others their freedom of religion appear. Anti-Semitism and denial of the rights of foreigners and other outsiders surge again. Forces of neo-Nazism and terrorism strengthen. Not surprisingly, such forces often deny the reality of the Holocaust or belittle its dimensions.

We are asked. Will there be an imperative to remember the Holocaust in the 21st century? The answer is: As long as humanity chooses life, then more and more people will remember and learn the lessons of the Holocaust. Then governments will more likely intervene to stop genocide, more likely create open, pluralist multi cultural societies, more likely deny dictators the claim that no one dare interfere in their internal affairs.

The true question is not whether humanity will honor the imperative to remember the Holocaust. The true question and challenge is: will humans rise to greatness in the choice of life.

Can our conscience seared by the fires of Auschwitz, become an irresistible political force so nations will not tolerate, nay, will intervene to stop genocide? Can the model of

the survivors and the righteous gentiles, inspire us to a new human solidarity that will enable all peoples to live in freedom and peace?

The memory of the victims and the voices of the survivors, the actions of the righteous and the rescuers call out to us: Choose life that you and your children may live.

POPE JOHN PAUL II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3544 which would award the Congressional Gold Medal to Pope John Paul II. As he celebrates his 80th birthday this Thursday, May 25, the spiritual leader of more than one billion Catholics around the world and millions of Catholics in the United States deserves our nation's highest Congressional honor.

In the recent past, we have honored Mother Teresa and South African President Nelson Mandela. The Pope clearly serves in such company as a global figure who continues to make an impact on spiritual and moral leadership and the struggle for equal rights and protection for all people.

There is no doubt that historians of the future will single out Pope John Paul II as one of the most influential leaders of his time. He used all the modern tools in transportation and communications to personally deliver his message of love and compassion to the far reaches of the globe. He not only made dialogue, but also influenced world movements such as the fall of Communism and the beginning of the third millennium of Christianity on earth.

We are fortunate to have lived in such changing times and to have had such leaders as the Pontiff who recognized the ever-changing facets of life around him and took steps to utilize necessary tools to effect change for the better. As he travels the world, he leads by example as a symbol of tolerance, peace and fairness not only for Catholics, but for people of different faiths, ethnicity and economic status. I commend the House for bringing this legislation to the floor and urge the enactment of this bill as expeditiously as possible.

COMMENDING ISRAEL'S REDEPLOYMENT FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to vote to commend Israel for its courageous decision to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

Israel stands as a reminder of the courage and strength of the human spirit—and what it can accomplish. Against all odds and enemies, the people of Israel have united to build a strong nation. It has not been an easy

journey, but it has been a triumphant one. Now, more than ever, as Israel strives to build a stable and peaceful region, it is vital that we unite behind its efforts.

This critical step must be followed by equal efforts by Israel's neighbors. It is vital that all foreign forces withdraw from Lebanese territory, that all acts of terrorism against the people of Israel cease, and that southern Lebanon be given a real chance of rebuilding and re-integrating. Southern Lebanon must never become the home base for attacks against Israel again.

Congratulations again to Israel for taking this brave step and for continuing to stand as an example of courage, vigilance, and dedication to peace.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE AMOS C. SAUNDERS

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the deeds of a man whom I and countless others consider to epitomize justice and fairness, the Honorable Amos C. Saunders of Totowa, New Jersey. Judge Saunders was recognized on Monday, May 15, 2000 at the Brownstone House in Paterson, New Jersey, because of his many years of service and leadership in the courtrooms of Passaic County, New Jersey. He marked the end of his stellar career when he retired on March 1, 2000. It is only fitting that Judge Saunders be honored in the annals of this great body for his unwavering efforts in the name of the law.

For the past 23 years Judge Amos Saunders has become one of the most well respected Superior Court Judges in the State of New Jersey. Judge Saunders has presided over criminal, civil and family courts and was the judge in Passaic County with the most judicial experience. Judge Saunders last sat in the Chancery Division, in which he served for the last 10 years. In doing his job, Judge Saunders' motto was, "Use your common sense, be practical, read all the papers and listen." It is by these words that he served as judge, but anyone who knows Judge Saunders knows that these words simply understate his jurisprudential excellence. As a leader in the judicial community, Judge Saunders' rulings have often served as both a precedent and a resource for other judges.

As a judge in the Chancery Division, Judge Saunders had the opportunity to handle probate, estate cases and injunctions. Over the years, however, Judge Saunders perhaps became best known as a nationally respected expert on the legal aspects of the sport of boxing. He handled many high profile boxing cases in his court including those of the prominent boxing promoters Lou and the late Dan Duva and Don King. In 1997, the International Boxing Digest magazine listed Judge Saunders as number 16 in the list of boxing's 50 most influential people.

Born in Paterson on March 9, 1934 and raised in Paterson and Fair Lawn, New Jersey, Judge Saunders has spent his years in dedicated service to the community. Judge Saunders received his Bachelor of Arts degree