

I am confident he will completely exemplify the Rotary motto. I join Rotarians throughout the world in congratulating Mr. King on the presidency and wishing him every success.

**HONORING MAJOR CHARLES
“CHUCK” MONGES**

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Major Charles “Chuck” Monges. Major Monges died of a massive heart attack at the age of 79 on July 24, 2001, in Fresno, CA.

Major Monges joined the United States Marines Corps after graduating from high school in 1940. He served for nine years during and after World War II, earning the rank of Sergeant. In 1952, Monges joined the United States Army where he served in the Korean War. After eleven years with the Army, he retired with the rank of Major.

Major Monges earned several distinguished awards for his service in the United States Military. During intense combat in World War II, Major Monges risked his own life by dragging a wounded soldier from the battlefield to safety. After his platoon came to his aid, they managed to annihilate the enemy. This extraordinary bravery earned him the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart.

In the Korean War, Major Monges earned the Bronze Star and the Soldier’s Medal for Bravery. Again, he dragged wounded soldiers away from a dangerous area, even though his own life was in danger. Once they were in a safe location, Monges proceeded to treat the wounds of the injured soldiers. Monges’ actions during combat defined him as a true American hero.

After his retirement from the military in 1963, Major Monges began his charge to establish a national museum to honor members of the Legion of Valor. The Legion of Valor was established in 1890 to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross, the Air Force Cross, and the Distinguished Service Cross. With help from other veterans and the Fresno City Council, Major Monges’ dream became reality in 1991. The 10,000 square foot Legion of Valor Museum was put together by a staff of volunteers and is one of the most unique and inspiring military museums in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory and life of Major Chuck Monges. I wish to send my condolences to his family and friends.

HONORING THOMAS L. BERKLEY

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas L. Berkley for his contributions to the community and to the Nation.

Mr. Berkley was born in Illinois in 1915. At the age of four, he and his family moved to Southern California. In 1936, he attended Fullerton Junior College, where he would later earn an Associate of Arts Degree. He went on to UCLA and completed his Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and Finance. Mr. Berkley was accepted into Hastings Law School in the San Francisco Bay Area, and became active in the NAACP. He received his Juris Doctor in 1942 and was admitted to the California State Bar a year later.

After finishing his academic career, Mr. Berkley proudly joined the United States Army. He fought bravely in World War II and achieved the rank of Second Lieutenant.

At the end of the war, Mr. Berkley came back to Oakland and became the head of one of the Nation’s largest integrated, bilingual law firms. He helped establish the careers of notable men such as Judge Clinton White and Allen Broussard, and former Mayors of Oakland, Elihu Harris and Lionel Wilson.

Mr. Berkley was not only active in law, but also active in business and in the media. He was the president of Berkley International Ltd., Berkley Technical Services and CEO of Berkley Financial Services. Mr. Berkley also was the publisher of the Alameda Publishing Corporation, which publishes the Oakland, San Francisco, and Richmond Post newspapers.

Mr. Berkley is a visionary and a motivator. He helped turn the Port of Oakland to a world-class facility. He saw the need for guidance to our children, so he served as a director for the Oakland Unified School District. He saw the need for social and economic improvement in some of Oakland’s neighborhoods, so he became an advisor to the Greater Acorn Community Improvement Association.

Mr. Berkley has lead a tireless and committed crusade to better our society. He not only helped spur business development, but he also helped individuals achieve their goals and dreams.

I am honored to salute and take great pride in celebrating with his family, friends and colleagues the distinguished accomplishments of Thomas L. Berkley.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber when roll call votes number 257, 258, and 259 were cast. I want the record to show that had I been present in this chamber at the time these votes were cast, I would have voted “yes” on roll call vote number 257, “yes” on roll call vote 258, “yes” on roll call vote 259.

**HUMAN RIGHTS IN CENTRAL ASIA
A DECADE AFTER INDEPENDENCE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as we head into our August recess, we should recall that almost ten years have passed since a group of conspirators attempted to topple

Soviet President Gorbachev. The failure of that putsch precipitated declarations of independence by numerous Soviet republics, including those in Central Asia, and led several months later to the formal dissolution of the USSR. Today, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan remain independent, a definite plus. But in other respects, we have witnessed regression from levels reached at the end of the Soviet era, when Gorbachev’s programs of glasnost and perestroika mandated a certain level of tolerance for opposing viewpoints and organized opposition activity.

Specifically, with respect to democratization, human rights and the rule of law, overall trends in the region are extremely discouraging. In 1992, these countries unreservedly accepted the commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). But despite the carefully crafted claims of Central Asian leaders and their spokesmen, in the region and in Washington, the trend is toward consolidation of authoritarian control and increased repression, not gradual democratization. The Helsinki Commission, which I have chaired and now co-chair, has held three hearings on Central Asia since 1999. Partly on the basis of testimony during those hearings, I introduced H. Con. Res. 397, which expressed the Congress’ concern about the lack of democratization and violations of fundamental human rights throughout Central Asia. The measure was passed last November by an overwhelming majority (362–3) of the House.

In floor statements introducing the resolution, I argued that the main cause of authoritarian government and repression in Central Asia was the determination of the region’s leaders to perpetuate themselves in power by any means necessary. This desire, in turn, is fueled by their corruption, which they strive to conceal from their impoverished publics. The pattern is infuriating: rulers enrich themselves, their families and favored few, while the rest of the population struggles to eke out a miserable existence. In turn, the authoritarian leaders suppress freedom of the press and the right to engage in political activity. Dissidents are harassed and jailed. Human rights defenders are tortured while being held incommunicado detention.

Indeed, one of the greatest challenges facing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is the emergence in Central Asia of an entire region where basic OSCE principles and commitments are ignored—in fact, flouted, with increasing brazenness. Turkmenistan’s President Niyazov made himself virtual president for life in December 1999. Kazakhstan’s President Nazarbaev—who has extended his tenure in office through referenda, canceling elections, and staging deeply flawed elections—last summer arranged to receive lifelong privileges and perks. In Kyrgyzstan, President Akaev, who was once considered democracy’s best hope, has already rigged two elections in order to keep serious contenders from running against him. He is now reportedly planning to stage a referendum on extending his tenure in office from five years to seven. Welcome to the club, President Akaev. I continue to suspect that some of these leaders who already head what are, for all intents and purposes, royal families are planning to establish family dynasties.

The latest developments in the region provide even more cause for alarm. Kyrgyz authorities have just brought new charges against opposition leader Felix Kulov, who is already serving a seven-year jail sentence. Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Imanaliev told me on a recent visit to Washington he thought Kulov would be freed—the Minister must have misread President Akaev's intentions.

Truly appalling is the situation in Uzbekistan, where literally thousands of people have been arrested, allegedly for belonging to radical Islamic groups or for involvement in terrorist activity. According to international human rights organizations, police planting of evidence is routine, as is torture in detention and in prison. I was horrified to learn of the death—or should I say the murder—of human rights activist Shovrug Ruzimuradov. After being detained on June 15, he was held incommunicado by the Ministry of Internal Affairs until July 7, when his severely bruised, lifeless body was delivered to his family, including seven children. Some internal organs had been removed, probably to conceal internal lesions from the torture. But that did not stop the Uzbek authorities from claiming he had committed suicide. The ensuing international uproar surrounding this case has apparently forced even the Uzbek authorities to take heed and change tactics. Former Ambassador to Washington, Sadyk Safaev, now Uzbekistan's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, said last week that those who killed Mr. Ruzimuradov would be held legally accountable.

Maybe in this case, some policemen will actually be charged. But even more important, this pattern of brutality must stop. At the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Paris earlier this month, I introduced an anti-torture resolution which calls on participating States to exclude in courts of law or legal proceedings evidence obtained through the use of torture, or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. It also calls for a complete ban, in law and in practice, on incommunicado detention.

In Kazakhstan, the nexus between corruption and control of the media has come to the fore with particular force, considering the recent publication in the New Yorker of an article about alleged high-level malfeasance. Independent and opposition media in that country have been intimidated practically out of existence, with editors of opposition publications risking charges of "insulting the honor and dignity of the president." Kazakhstan's authorities prevented two oppositionists from traveling to Washington to testify July 18 at congressional hearings on Central Asia, a violation of the right to freedom of movement that further damaged the government's already tarnished reputation. To make matters even worse, at the July 18 hearing, Kazakhstani officials attempted to serve papers to former Prime Minister and opposition leader in exile, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, who had come to Washington for the hearing. The Deputy Chief of Mission at Kazakhstan's Embassy had to come to the Hill to explain this public relations blunder to offended Members. One can only conclude that Kazakhstan's leaders are either getting poor counsel from their expensive imagemakers or they're not clever enough to take good advice.

Words fail us when speaking about Turkmenistan, a nightmare kingdom run by a

world-class megalomaniac, Saparmurat Niyazov. He has carefully isolated his country from the outside world and proceeded to violate every human right imaginable, including freedom of conscience. Along with fellow Helsinki Commissioners Congressman PITTS and Congressman ADERHOLT, I have twice met with Turkmenistan's Ambassador, seeking to facilitate the release from prison of Shageldy Atakov, a Baptist pastor who has been in jail since 1999 on trumped-up charges. We also sent Turkmen President Niyazov a letter about this case but we have never received any response. Even the international financial institutions have had enough: the head of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)—which has a mandate to promote both economic reform and multiparty democracy—recently warned Niyazov that he faces a possible cutoff of business with the bank unless he implements economic reform and multiparty democracy within a year.

In fact, only in Tajikistan have the authorities and opposition parties come to an arrangement of sorts—but only after a military stalemate ended an armed conflict that left scores of thousands dead. Though a coalition government has been established, clashes continue and the government does not control all of the country's territory.

Mr. Speaker, the last ten years have stripped Western optimists of their illusions about the nature of Central Asian regimes. Almost nobody today will speak out on behalf of Turkmenistan's regime, despite that country's vast energy resources. Mercurial, bombastic President-for-life Niyazov has irritated Western capitals and companies too deeply, and made doing business too difficult. True, some analysts defend Uzbekistan's iron fist, claiming to see a genuine threat of Islamic fundamentalism. But even the U.S. Government and the OSCE maintain President Karimov's domestic policies have greatly exacerbated the danger posed by radicals who fill their ranks with embittered relatives of the unjustly arrested or tortured.

Most often, we hear arguments defending Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan—especially the former, which boasts huge oil supplies. Backers claim, first, that they are more democratic than their neighbors. True enough: it would be difficult to be less democratic than Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which literally do not allow opposition or dissent in any form. But more insidious is the contention that things in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are slowly getting better. This is simply not true, as anyone familiar with those countries ten and five years ago knows. In the past, political activity was far freer and a wide range of viewpoints were represented in the press, before Kazakhstan's parliament was dismissed and both presidents made clear their resolve to remain in power indefinitely, while silencing critical voices. One need only read the reports of the OSCE's Missions to these countries today, or the reports of OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media, to see how the possibilities for freedom of expression have narrowed, almost to the point of disappearance in Kazakhstan. That is clearly the trend in Kyrgyzstan, where the Ministry of Justice intends to require re-registration of the media—an old, obvious ploy, with equally obvious intent.

Throughout the region, this intensified repression has evoked growing desperation and we are already witnessing the consequences:

armed insurgents of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan invaded Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in 1999 and 2000. Though they have not yet launched any major assault this year, there were reports of clashes last week and in any case, we should not expect them to go away. Impoverishment of the populace will provide new recruits, threatening to create a chronic problem. The Central Asian leaders' marriage of corruption and repression has created an explosive brew. Indeed, in Uzbekistan, in late June and early July, there were political protests remarkable events for such a tightly run police state—with important implications for future stability in that country and in the region.

Should we infer from Tajikistan's unhappy experience that only violence can bring governments and opposition in Central Asia to the bargaining table? I hope not. But ten years after independence, I see precious little evidence anywhere in the region of leaders' desire for a peaceful accommodation of interests or a willingness to allow normal politics. And as leaders become even more entrenched and wealthier, why should anyone expect matters to improve?

As delineated in H. Con. Res. 397, passed by the House last year, I urge the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and other United States officials to raise consistently with the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, our concern about serious violations of human rights and the rule of law. Central Asian leaders, like the heads of every other OSCE State, are accountable to their citizens to establish conditions for independent and opposition media to function without constraint, limitation, or fear of harassment, and to repeal criminal laws which impose prison sentences for alleged defamation of the state or public officials. The United States must continue to call upon political leaders to condemn and take effective steps to cease the systematic use of torture and other inhuman treatment by authorities against political opponents and others, and to allow the registration of independent human rights monitoring organizations. Those governments of Central Asia which are engaged in military campaigns against violent insurgents must observe international law regulating such actions, keep civilians and other noncombatants from harm, and should not use such campaigns to justify further crackdowns on political opposition or violations of human rights commitments.

Mr. Speaker, all OSCE countries agreed, as part of the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Charter, to be accountable to our citizens and responsible to each other for our implementation of OSCE commitments, which are matters of immediate and legitimate concern to all participating States. The OSCE Council of Ministers meeting in Prague, in fact, agreed by consensus that appropriate actions—including political declarations and other political steps—should be undertaken in cases of "clear, gross and uncorrected violations of relevant [OSCE] commitments." Nine years have passed since the Prague document was signed by the OSCE countries. With the trend of clear, gross and uncorrected violations which have been described above, all participating States are obliged to respond.

THE EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

HON. RICHARD A. GEPhARDT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. GEPhARDT. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) which is being reintroduced today. This bill will make sure that individuals have protections against workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Today, there is no federal law to fight discrimination of this kind. This is unacceptable. Under current law, law-abiding, hard-working Americans can be denied a job, fired or discriminated against in other ways simply because they are or are perceived to be gay or lesbian.

ENDA will extend the promise of equal opportunity and civil rights to more Americans. Twelve states have such laws on the books. The private sector realizes the need and value of these workplace protections; in fact, more than 50 percent of Fortune 500 companies have nondiscrimination policies which include sexual orientation. And an overwhelming number of Americans support equal workplace rights for gay and lesbian Americans.

This legislation says simply that discrimination in employment because of sexual orientation is illegal, and will not be tolerated. This is strong, badly-needed legislation for countless Americans who have suffered, or who are vulnerable to discrimination because they do not have protections similar to those afforded millions of their fellow citizens. I strongly hope that we will debate and pass this bill this year.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2590) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Hastings amendment to the bill, and I commend my neighbor and colleague for bringing this issue to the Floor of the House.

America is the freest and most prosperous nation on earth. We are the strongest and most resilient democracy on the planet. Yet last November, we failed our citizens in the most fundamental way.

The right to vote cuts to the very bone of our democracy. When tens of thousands of Americans cast their ballots—only to have them thrown out—whether you like the results of the Presidential election or not—it is undeniable that something is wrong in America. If we fail to learn from this tragic experience then shame on us.

What happened in Palm Beach County, Florida on election day is personal to me. I

saw it with my own eyes. I experienced it myself. I stood in front of voting precincts and witnessed a horrible state of confusion.

I rise today representing the citizens of my district who went to vote on election day only to be confronted with a puzzle rather than a ballot. I watched the dismay and felt the anger of patriotic Americans, many of whom fought in World War II and Korea, and haven't missed an election in over 50 years, as their votes were rendered meaningless.

I support the Hastings electoral reform amendment to give a voice to those Floridians whose votes were callously discarded due to a ballot that was so confusing intelligent men and women unknowingly cast two votes for President, or one vote for the wrong man.

I support the Hastings electoral reform amendment because the collapse of the election system in Florida was not color-blind. The facts speak for themselves. Fifty-four percent of Florida's discarded ballots were cast by African-Americans, even though African-Americans only comprise eleven percent of Florida's voters.

Think about that. African-American voters were ten times more likely than white voters to have their ballots rejected in Florida. This reality is indefensible and we must act now to repair our citizens' faith in the system.

Have no doubt about it, this is not just a Florida problem. It stretches coast to coast. Many of the problems that confronted Florida on election day occurred in other states. In fact, more votes were thrown out in Illinois than in Florida. This is a federal problem that demands federal attention.

What happened in Florida on election day highlighted for the entire world that in America, even for a Presidential election, we have no national standards for the design of ballots—we have no national standards for the counting of ballots—we have no national standards for voting machinery—we have no national standards to prevent thousands of Americans from being purged from voter roles—and we have no reliable way to count the overseas ballots of the men and women in the military.

The good news is—this problem can be solved, but we must commit the necessary resources. I strongly support the amendment sponsored by Representative HASTINGS which makes a substantial down payment on our obligation to help state and local governments modernize their election equipment and renew the integrity of our democracy. Electoral reform must not be a partisan cause. It is our national obligation.

Election 2000 was a wake-up call to all Americans that we must not take our democracy for granted. We must commit the money, the resources and the energy to fix our election process once and for all. To do anything less is unforgivable.

I urge you to support the amendment.

RECOGNIZING THE ESCORT CARRIER SAILORS AND AIRMEN ASSOCIATION

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I am honored to rise and speak in recognition

of the Escort Aircraft Carrier Sailors and Airmen Association. Members of the ECSAA served our country in both World War II and the Korean Conflict aboard the CVE Aircraft Carriers, better known as "Baby Flattops." Through their acts of bravery, these Veterans helped to bring World War II to an early conclusion and saved numerous lives. Until now, they have gone unrecognized for their invaluable contributions to the military successes of our nation. It is time for our Government to make its appreciation evident to these brave Veterans and recognize them, as a whole, for their valor and dedication to the preservation of our great country and its people.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2620) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the amendment being offered by my colleague, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, to prohibit any funds from being used to implement the veterans equity resource allocation system.

VERA was created to correct a perceived inequity in the manner in which veterans health care dollars were being distributed across the country.

While a noble effort, VERA was fundamentally flawed in that it did not look at the type of care being delivered to veterans in a given region. Furthermore, it also failed to consider the effect of regional costs of providing health care in its calculations.

Under VERA, the watchword was efficiency. Deliver the most care at the least cost. While ideal for outpatient care, VERA has unfairly penalized those VISNs that provide vital services such as substance abuse treatment, services for homeless veterans, mental health services, and spinal cord injury treatments. Under VERA, these services are all deemed too expensive and "inefficient."

VERA was also implemented at a time when the VA budget was essentially flat-lined. Thus, VISN directors were not provided additional funds to offset the costs of annual pay raises for VA staff, and annual medical inflation costs. This was not a problem for those directors of VISNs that received money under VERA. However, for those directors in VISNs, that were losing money under VERA, it was a double hit that crowded out additional funds needed for other vital services.

It is commendable that the subcommittee was able to find an additional \$1.2 billion for veterans medical care. Yet, thanks to VERA, very little of that money will find its way to the