

Do you know that it is dalits, atheists and even moslems who have taken up the issue of the present Bill which is bound to affect the Christians the most? Dr. Satinath Choudhry is one of the earliest to respond. The objections to the Bill have appeared before the secular and dalit E-fora even before the head of any Church has even taken note of the Bill. Fascism is here and now. The very rights of individuals are at stake. Have you done enough???

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 298 and 299, final passage of H.R. 2647, Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2002 and the approval of the Journal, I was detained at the White House in a meeting on World Conference Against Racism. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both.

TRIBUTE TO RUTH HYMAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of Congress to an event on Thursday, August 16 in New Jersey. The Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Monmouth County is holding a dinner and tribute at Temple Beth El of Oakhurst to honor Ruth Hyman. Ruth will have the distinction of being honored for her work as a philanthropist and her support of Jewish causes in the area, as well as in Israel.

Ruth, a close friend of mine, was born in my hometown of Long Branch, New Jersey into a family of four boys and four girls. She says that her parents' direction and teachings of tzedakah, menschlichkeit, and the Torah guided her to be the person that she is today.

Ruth's teachings as a child can well be seen in her community involvement. She is a life member of Daughters of Miriam, charter and life member of the Central Jersey Jewish Home for the Aged, founder and past chairperson of the Federation Women's Business and Professional Division, benefactor and board member of the Jewish Community Center, and an active member of B'nai Brith, AMIT, and Congregation Brothers of Israel. For the past twenty-five years Ms. Hyman has been the Chairperson of the Women's Division of Israel Bonds, and for the past twenty-six years she has been the president of the Long Branch Hadassah.

This is not the first time that Ruth has been honored for her service to the community. Ruth has received the Service Award from the Jewish Federation Women's Campaign, Woman of Valor of the Long Branch chapter of Hadassah, Israel Bonds Golda Meir Award and the Ben Gurion Award, Lay Leader of the

Year by the Jewish Federation, and the Hadassah National Leadership Award. The community cannot express the debt that we owe to my friend Ruth who has shown us all that selflessness will never go unrecognized.

I want to personally thank Ruth Hyman for being a leader of the Jewish community and an excellent role model for our youth.

HONORING CONNEE GARTLAND ON HER 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring a very special person, Mrs. Connee Gartland, on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Family and friends will gather this weekend in Dennisport, Massachusetts to celebrate this milestone.

Constance Doris Fischer Gartland was born on August 7, 1921 in Boston, Massachusetts to Alfons and Louise M. Fischer. She earned a B.S. Degree in Education from Salem State College in 1943 and a Master's in Business from Boston University in 1945. During her distinguished career as an educator, she held the position of Business Education Teacher at Mary Brooks School and Academie Moderne, both in Boston; and Weston High School in Weston, Massachusetts.

On October 7, 1950 Connee married Edward V. Gartland, Jr. They became the proud parents of four children: Susan, Pamela, Deborah and Edward V. III and eventually the proud grandparents of five grandchildren; Brian and Kevin Anderson, Delaney and Riley Cruickshank, and Edward V. Gartland IV. They lived in Newton, Massachusetts and spent summers in their home in Dennisport.

With warmth and generosity, Connee and Ed opened their hearts and home over the years to neighbors and friends of all ages and from all parts of the country. There was always lively and enjoyable conversation in their home because of their many interests and activities.

During the winter, Connee now lives in Fort Myers, Florida where she is a member of the Development Committee at her church. Other memberships include the Women's Club, the 9-Holers Golf League, where she held the position of Treasurer; and the staff of the Lake Fairways Newsletter, The Informer.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in sending our congratulations to a wonderful person, Connee Gartland, who has touched so many lives as a former educator, parent, grandparent, and friend. Let us extend our best wishes for a Happy 80th Birthday and continued health and happiness.

U.S. RELATIONS WITH PERU

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, U.S. relations with Peru have recently become a matter of concern due to the shoot-down of the U.S. missionary plane, with the death of two U.S. nationals, a mother and her child, and the continued imprisonment of Lori Berenson. At the same time, we have been witnessing the growing accusations of corruption and human rights abuses stemming from the arrest of former Peruvian spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos. The fact that Berenson was arrested and convicted at a time when Montesinos virtually controlled the country's judiciary system is enough to arouse suspicion over the country's ability to have fairly administered justice.

Berenson's recent sham retrial, under Peru's current provisional government, has served to bolster those suspicions. As a result of the judiciary's long ties to the country's corrupt political system, Berenson's second trial before a civilian judge, which sentenced her to twenty years in prison, marked only a slight improvement over the original 1996 military trial in which a hooded judge sentenced Berenson to life imprisonment.

On the eve of a potential new era of politics in Peru, the time to act on the Berenson case is now. On July 28th, president-elect Alejandro Toledo will be sworn in as Peru's new president and the country, which had been gripped by autocracy for the last ten years under now-disgraced former President Alberto Fujimori, will be given a genuine opportunity to break with its corrupt past. President Bush and the U.S. Congress should do all that they can to assist President Toledo and the whole of Peru in their recovery from ten years of corrupt leadership, if the new administration ensures that Lori Berenson be granted justice. Regarding the Berenson case, we would like to know if the State Department did enough to protect this U.S. national and what exactly were the ties between this country and Montesinos, and did we do enough to publicize the villainy of this man. I'm afraid the answers to these questions may prove embarrassing.

Beyond the moral obligation to intervene on Berenson's behalf, the President has a legal obligation to seek Berenson's release. Under U.S. Code 22 Section 1732, the President must do everything in his power, short of acts of war, to obtain or effectuate the release of a U.S. citizen wrongfully incarcerated by a foreign government.

The following press memorandum was authorized by Mariah Freark and Sabrina Blum, Research Associates at the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), an organization that has been long-committed to addressing issues associated with democracy and human rights throughout the hemisphere. COHA's researchers have often spoken out about controversial issues regarding U.S. relations with Latin America. The attached press memorandum addresses information concerning Lori Berenson and Peru, and should serve to enlighten us.

[From the American Prospect, May 25, 2001]

OUR MAN IN LITTLE HAVANA

THE SECRET COLD WAR HISTORY OF OTTO JUAN REICH, GEORGE W. BUSH'S FRIGHTENING NOMINEE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS

(By Jason Vest)

It was the summer of 1985 and John Lantigua, then The Washington Post's Nicaragua stringer, discovered he had a new nickname, at least among American right-wingers: "Johnny Sandinista."

For many senior politicians in the Reagan Administration, Nicaragua was a black and white issue. If you weren't pro-Contra and anti-Sandinista, you were a dupe of two malevolent forces: What one senior official euphemistically called "the source" of evil in this hemisphere—Cuba—and the power behind Cuba that then Director of Central Intelligence William J. Casey held was the center of all world terrorism and subversion: the Soviet Union.

John Lantigua's reporting didn't reflect such a Manichean worldview, and for that, the Administration would try to smear him and others who didn't "come on-side." In a "report" produced by the far-right "media watchdog" group Accuracy in Media, Daniel James—identified only as a "Latin America expert," but, in fact, a longtime CIA contract propagandist—reported that, according to unnamed U.S. government officials, Lantigua was being furnished with live-in female Sandinista sex slaves in exchange for penning Sandinista agitprop.

To those who covered Central America, the charges were absurd: Not only was Lantigua living with his American fiancée, but he was in the middle of a freeze-out by the Sandinistas, who, along with the Reagan Administration, sometimes found Lantigua's reporting to be inconvenient. Lantigua got a kick out of the item, assuming that it had originated with Otto Reich, a particularly ideological State Department official who Lantigua and his Newsday colleague Morris Thompson had met for lunch when Reich had made a brief visit to "Venezuela's foreign policy does not depend on the ambassadors in Caracas." Eventually the U.S. prevailed on Venezuela to honor Reich's diplomatic credentials, though he wasn't an entirely beloved figure in Caracas: In 1989, for instance, the newspaper La Republica reported, with some umbrage, that Reich had turned the U.S. Embassy into something of a support base for the Panamanian Civic Crusade, an anti-Noriega group backed by the CIA.

In the view of Larry Birns, the head of Washington's Council on Hemispheric Affairs, the combination of Reich's hard-line views, current business connections, and Iran-Contra past would make him a disastrous choice to be the United States' point person for Latin America. "It would be of interest to anticipate the violent polemical struggle between Fortune 500 U.S. multinationals, most of whom denounced Helms-Burton for interfering with trade with Cuba, and the State Department's Latin American office under an ideologically driven Reich." (Birns is also alarmed at the prospect of Roger Noriega, another Jesse Helms favorite, being named Ambassador to the Organization of American States.)

"If confirmed, [Reich's] tenure will inevitably be littered with hemispheric vendettas, abusive run-ins with strong-willed regional leaders, and a cheerful indifference to state department rules and regulations," Birns says. "During his years in the public sector, Reich seemingly has found it against the very marrow of his personality and basic nature to be able to walk down a straight path. If [Secretary of State Colin] Powell con-

tinues to maintain that Reich and Noriega are the best qualified candidates to fill the vacancies, then the Secretary of State can expect to soon be hearing from Saturday Night Live."

[From the News Mexico, Jan. 20, 2001]

FAREWELL TO CLINTON, WELCOME TO BUSH BUSH SEEN AS MAN WHO CAN DO BUSINESS WITH MEXICO

(By Krista Larson)

WASHINGTON—Throughout his campaign, the former Texas governor who will become the 43rd president of the United States on Saturday emphasized his experience leading a border state with strong economic ties to its southern neighbor. He even demonstrated his Spanish in stump speeches.

As George W. Bush is inaugurated, experts say there appear to be new opportunities for improved bilateral relations between neighbors, but that potential obstacles also lie ahead.

"Obviously Mexico is going to be predominate on the radar screen, and that can result in more activity," said Armand Peschard-Sverdrup, director of the Mexico Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "With the more activity, chances are you could also have points of tension."

There is an image that Bush will be a "bigger ear in Washington" for Mexico-U.S. relations than in the past, said Larry Birns, director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

"It may not easily play out in specific policies, but certainly in lingo and rhetoric the White House is going to refer to its relations with Mexico as being all-important," Birns said.

Bush's experience in Texas was cited by Peschard-Sverdrup as significant. "The border is definitely the frontline of the relationship," he said. "With Bush being a former border governor, he definitely has first hand experience of managing the relationship at the state level, and I think that's going to give him a better perspective than someone from a state that obviously doesn't have as much interaction with Mexico."

Bush has already met with President Vicente Fox when Fox traveled to the United States shortly after his July 2 presidential victory.

"The good thing is at least at the level of the presidency, there's an affinity toward each other's country and they personally seem to get along," Peschard-Sverdrup said. "Once you have that type of engagement at the presidential level, you would expect that would then transcend down to the Cabinet."

During his campaign, Bush said he had a vision for the two countries and declared that the United States is "destined to have a special relationship with Mexico, as clear and strong as we have had with Canada and Great Britain." He pledged in August to look south "not as an afterthought, but as a fundamental commitment of my presidency." And he said he'd "fulfill the promise of hemispheric free trade" by building on the North American Free Trade Agreement and other regional trade initiatives.

That doesn't mean the new administrations won't be without potential disagreements. "There are disruptive issues out there," said Birns, noting there will be pressure to address the certification process that has been an irritant to Mexicans for years. "Republicans are much less likely to eliminate the drug certification process than the Democrats would have been."

BUSH ON KEY ISSUES

Trade: Bush wants to restore fast-track negotiating authority and said his priorities will include expanding free trade "within our own hemisphere." Also plans to "vigorously

enforce" anti-dumping and laws to combat unfair trade practices.

Immigration: While Bush is strongly opposed to illegal immigration, he has said more should be done to welcome legal immigrants. He supports expanding temporary agricultural workers program and increasing the number of high-tech worker visas. He favors a six-month standard for processing immigration application and would encourage family reunification. He has said he would support legislation to divide the immigration and Naturalization Service into separate agencies for naturalization and for enforcement. He has also pledged that "with expanded patrols, we can make our borders something more than lines on a map." Wants to hire more agents and focus a reformed INS "on the job of defending our border."

Drugs: Bush has said that the United States is the market that sustains the narcotics trade and has pledged to improve interdiction. His "Southwest Border initiative" would provide 5 million dollars annually to reimburse border counties for prosecuting federal drug cases and would appoint a coordinator responsible for working with federal and local agencies.

[From the New York Times, May 6, 2001]

NEW CHALLENGE TO THE BOGOTÁ LEADERSHIP POOR REGION'S GOVERNORS UNITE TO OPPOSE DRUG PLAN AND SEEK AID

(By Juan Forero)

IBAGUE, Colombia—Normally, Guillermo Jaramillo, governor of a poor and debt-ridden province, could expect to be ignored by Colombia's highly centralized government in far off Bogotá.

It has been this way since colonial times, with the capital, high in the Andes, dictating policies as it sees fit, often regardless of the wishes of local officials.

But these days, Mr. Jaramillo and five like-minded governors—all from southern provinces mired in civil conflict and where most of the country's illicit drug crops are grown—have not only attracted the attention of Bogotá but also angered entrenched politicians who frown on insolent regional leaders.

The reason is that the governors, all of whom won office last October, have organized into a formidable political bloc that has harshly criticized the central government for everything from the handling of finances to the drug war.

That has embarrassed officials in Bogotá and highlighted the lack of support in rural Colombia for an American-financed program that largely relies on aerial defoliation to stamp out drug production.

Indeed, the governors have gone as far as Europe and Washington to criticize the program, which has destroyed coca fields across southern Colombia but displaced and alienated farmers.

The governors instead propose their own voluntary eradication program of coca and heroin poppy fields, and have sought out foreign governments for financing and technical expertise.

Most troubling to Bogotá, some of the governors have expressed the desire to hold their own talks with insurgencies that have been at war for years, leftist rebels and right-wing paramilitaries. Some in Bogotá, however, see such a proposal as nothing short of treason, since peace negotiations are held under the sole mandate of President Andrés Pastrana.

"This is a threat against the Constitution and against the peace process," said Robert Camacho, a Bogotá congressman.

Some Colombia experts say that the governors' efforts, while understandable in a

country whose rural regions have long been forgotten, could prove damaging to the country as a whole.

The governors' movement, called the southern bloc, has stirred enough concern that new life has been injected into proposed congressional legislation that would sanction local officials who are seen as meddling in the peace process. The bill was first proposed last fall, before the governors took office.

"These governors are popularly elected, and they are realizing a program contrary to their duties: dividing the state," said Fernando Giraldo, dean of the political science department at the Javeriana University in Bogotá.

Because of the southern bloc, said Mr. Giraldo, Colombia is "before the international community displaying a fragmented voice, the president on one side and the governors on the other."

In interviews, the governors said their goal is not to destabilize. Rather, they said, the aim is simply to draw attention to their region's problems and to obtain resources for regional public projects and agricultural development programs seen as alternatives to defoliation.

If the aid comes from Bogotá, so be it, the governors say; but they say they will continue to appeal to foreign governments, too. The southern bloc's proposals are still in the planning stages, and little financial support has gone their way.

"What we want for the regions, for the provinces as well as the towns, is the possibility to express ourselves," said Mr. Jaramillo, speaking in his office overlooking a public square here in Ibagué, the capital of the province of Tolima. "That is why we've gone out to explain our ideas, and present what we think is a bit different from the national government's concepts."

The governors said that they supported Mr. Pastrana's peace efforts and respected his authority when it came to negotiating, but they said they wanted the particular concerns of their provinces to be aired by local officials in those talks with the insurgencies.

The governors and other provincial officials also hinted, as many local officials in Colombia do, that the government should open dialogue with paramilitary groups, something Mr. Pastrana's government has refused. Recently, in fact, Mr. Jaramillo met with the paramilitary leader, Carlos Castaño, and also paid a visit to the rebels.

"What we've said is we cannot sign a peace pact, but we can do a peace process," said Floro Tunubalá, the governor of Cauca. "And to do a peace process means talking."

The southern bloc is a mixture of traditionalists and upstarts. They include Parmenio Cuéllar of Nariño, a former senator and minister of justice, and Mr. Jaramillo, a pediatric heart surgeon who has operated on 1,200 children.

"This is something that can jeopardize the country's well-being," added Mr. Camacho, who in recent speech said the governor's bloc is akin to a secessionist movement. "It is about war and peace and too delicate for them to do what they want."

The group also has the most unlikely governor in Colombia, Mr. Tunubalá a Guambiano Indian who won office in a province well known for discrimination and social inequality. Mr. Tunubalá's political movement—composed of Indians, union leaders, poor farmers, intellectuals and others outside the province's circle of power—has already angered some people in Cauca and prompted death threats.

The other governors, longtime local politicians, are from Huila and the two provinces where most of Colombia's coca grows, Putumayo and Caquetá.

The governors acknowledge that local officials have more control since the country's 1991 Constitution gave regional leaders more decisionmaking powers and resources.

But revenue is still raised by the central government. The six provinces, the size of Kansas and with a combined population of six million, also remain desperately poor and rural in a largely urban country.

The region also contains three-quarters of the country's coca crops and nearly all the poppy fields, employing 335,000 people in all.

The very fact that an alliance exists is "essentially a cry for help, a collective petition for the government to do something," said Larry Birns, a Colombia expert and director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs in Washington. "These are governors that, because they come from peripheral states, have been neglected."

The issue that most unites the governors is their opposition to defoliation, which they warn alienates their constituents without resolving the problems, that lead farmers to cultivate illegal crops.

Juan de Jesús Cárdenas, governor of Huila, said regional leaders across the south believed that defoliation would simply drive farmers to cultivate coca and poppies in other regions.

"That is what has happened with defoliation of Putumayo, with the movement of displaced people into Nariño," said the governor, whose province serves as a corridor for drugs and rebels.

The governors want to replace illicit crops by prodding farmers to eradicate in exchange for subsidies and markets for their products. The Colombian government, with American money and expertise, is running such a program, but the governors said they were working to tailor their own programs to meet the needs of farmers in their provinces.

"We need gradual eradication," said Mr. Tunubalá. "We need to put in new crops, and we need to look for markets nationally and internationally."

That was the reason for Mr. Jaramillo's recent trip to a mountainous rebel-controlled region in southern Tolima. There, Mr. Jaramillo met with farmers to urge them to participate in the eradication program financed by the Americans. It was not easy. Most had felt ignored by a central government they view as inept and unresponsive.

Several farmers, after meeting with Mr. Jaramillo, said they would not have agreed to meet with or participate had it not been for the governor, whom they view as independent from Bogotá. Leftist rebels who showed up uninvited—and had the power to quash any government plan in the region—allowed farmers to move forward in part because of Mr. Jaramillo's involvement.

"He from these lands," said one farmer, Ramiro Pérez, 38 standing on a steep mountain where he grows poppies. "We've seen him here. He has worked hard to get here. Maybe that means good news."

[From the Berkshire Eagle, Sept. 2, 2000]

SOME AMERICAN STRUGGLES

(By Mark Miller)

PITTSFIELD—This week, the president of the United States spent part of a day in Cartagena, Colombia, talking about the drug trade and democracy. The president of Peru announced a new trial for an American serving a life sentence as a convicted terrorist. Venezuela's politics were eclipsed by reports of lawsuits over defective Firestone tires there. Nicaragua continue to be absent from our news while, as usual, we Americans could walk into a discount store and get bargains on back-to-school clothes stitched in Nicaragua.

WASHINGTON REPORT ON THE HEMISPHERE

Washington Report on the Hemisphere is a biweekly newsletter from the Council on Hemispheric Affairs that keeps a sharp eye on the rest of the Americas outside the United States. The Aug. 7 and 16 issues (COHA is no slave to the calendar) both lead off with updates on the exploits of Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's immensely popular though unconventional president. I'd forgotten he had engineered the renaming of his nation the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, after Simon Bolivar, the Venezuelan leader in early 19th-century South American struggles for independence from Spain.

Chavez "made a healthy start on his campaign promise to weed out the systematic corruption infesting the ranks of the bureaucracy, by sacking hundreds of judges from all layers of the country's notorious judiciary that was plagued by unabated nepotism and inefficiency. His next move was to bring about some badly needed new management to this state oil company (Petroleos de Venezuela) that, as stated in the new constitution, will forever be insulated from privatization."

Business investors are unenthusiastic about Chavez. Note is made (crediting an Economist Intelligence Unit report) of "the rapid rate at which foreign firms are packing up and leaving over concerns of an increasingly hostile business climate. Historically, foreign investment has been an Achilles heel for Venezuela, averaging a mere 2 percent of its [gross domestic product] over the past decade."

Chavez has visited Cuba five times since 1998, recently praising Fidel Castro's "visionary work," and has been cultivating leaders in "oil-exporting hubs including Libya, Iraq and Iran in an effort to convince these OPEC nations to sustain the high price of gasoline . . ." Chavez has been criticized within his own country for his bold moves to freely associate himself with rogue nations, thereby going out of his way to damage relations with the U.S., which remains the largest importer of Venezuelan oil."

[From the New York Times, Dec. 18, 2000]

LATIN AMERICA IS PRIORITY ON BUSH TRADE AGENDA

(By Anthony DePalma)

He may not be comfortable discussing unrest in East Timor, or pronouncing the name of the leaders of Turkmenistan, but President-elect George W. Bush considers the rest of the Western Hemisphere "our backyard" and will have several opportunities in his first year in office to make Latin America a trade and foreign policy priority.

During the campaign, Mr. Bush said he would kickstart the stalled process of getting a free trade agreement of the Americas signed by 2005. The agreement would build on the North American Free Trade Agreement, which went into effect in 1994, and would unite 34 of the countries in North, Central and South America into what President Clinton once said would be "the world's largest market."

The first order of business would be a bruising battle in a divided Congress over fast-track authority, the legislative tool that Mr. Bush will need to negotiate a comprehensive trade deal. Under fast track, trade deals are brought to Congress for approval only when complete. Congress then votes on the agreement without having the chance to add amendments that suit the needs and wishes of individual members.

"I'd expect that within the first 100 days in office he'll propose approval of fast-track authority," said Sidney Weintraub, an economist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former deputy assistant secretary of state for international finance and development.

Even though Republicans narrowly control the House of Representatives, Mr. Bush will need to reach across the aisle to Democrats for help in getting fast-track authority approved. Mr. Weintraub expects that the need for bipartisan cooperation will provide Democrats an opportunity to attach environment and labor standards to the bill, although Mr. Bush has made it clear that he does not support such standards if they are too rigidly drawn.

In negotiating a trade deal, Mr. Bush would also have to heed strongly voiced opposition to such side agreements from some Latin American nations, led by Brazil, that fear that labor and environmental standards attached to a trade deal could be used as protectionist shields by American businesses that feel threatened by Latin American competition.

In a campaign speech in Miami in August, Mr. Bush said the Clinton administration dropped the ball on Latin America after losing the legislative battle to win fast-track authority. In the speech, he said that by the time the third Summit of the Americas meets, a fast-track bill will already have been introduced in Congress.

"When the next president sits at the Americas Summit in Quebec next April, other nations must know that fast-track authority is on the way," he said during the campaign.

Although Mr. Bush criticized President Clinton for stalling the drive for a free trade agreement of the Americas, the process has actually been chugging along, though largely out of sight. Negotiating teams have continued to work on technical details, and when trade officials gather in Quebec, a substantial framework for the trade negotiations leading to a 2005 deal will be in place.

"The 2005 date was set at the first Americas Summit in Miami in 1994 and reconfirmed at the second in Santiago," said Richard E. Feinberg, a former senior director of the National Security Council's Office of Inter-American Affairs under President Clinton and now a professor at the graduate school of international relations at the University of California in San Diego. "All the major players remain committed to the 2005 date."

During the campaign, Mr. Bush talked about developing a "special relationship" with Mexico, which is one of the few foreign countries he has ever visited. Referring more broadly to all of Latin America, he said he would "look south, not as an afterthought but as a fundamental commitment of my presidency."

As governor of a border state, Mr. Bush has had a front-row seat on the expansion of international trade, and the effect on Texas has been substantial. According to a recent study by the Council of the Americas, Texas exports to Mexico have more than doubled since NAFTA came into force in 1994.

Mr. Bush will not have to worry about union opposition to new international trade deals as much as Vice President Al Gore would have, but there is a segment of the Republican Party that has become increasingly protectionist and could complicate any trade deal. That could force Mr. Bush to take a page from Mr. Clinton's playbook and cast increased trade in political and strategic terms, as Mr. Clinton did in winning a trade vote on China.

Mr. Bush had promised to meet with Mexico's president, Vicente Fox Quesada, even be-

fore Mr. Fox was inaugurated on Dec. 1, a signal that the administrations of both countries, starting at roughly the same time, would work in tandem to resolve common problems like illegal immigration, illicit drugs and environmental pollution. Because of the extraordinary delays in the American election, the meeting never took place, but Mr. Bush sent a congratulatory message to Mr. Fox on the day of his inauguration.

Mr. Fox has already taken a preemptive lead on some of these areas. During the summer he visited Mr. Clinton and both presidential candidates, and talked freely about his ideas for deepening NAFTA and taking measures to reduce barriers that prevent Mexican workers from entering the United States to find work.

Mr. Fox's ideas were not warmly embraced by either Democrats or Republicans, and a close relationship with him and Mexico could put Mr. Bush into a difficult position with members of his own party.

"He will, as he said, have a 'special relationship' with Mexico, but the question now is what kind of relationship will it be," said Larry Birns, director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs in Washington, who supported Mr. Gore. "Here is where a Bush presidency might run into real trouble."

[From the Miami Herald, May 30, 2001]

GIVING HAITI A CHANCE

(By Larry Birns and Sarah Townes)

Haiti's seemingly eternal malaise is, if anything, worsening as a result of disruptive local politics, shrill rhetoric and the near elimination of overseas assistance.

Even though President Jean-Bertrand Aristide (who last November again won the presidency by a huge margin) agreed to a number of mischievous conditions for U.S. aid to resume, Washington has given no indication that it would be forthcoming. The U.S. campaign of economic asphyxiation and political isolation is not only unseemly, but also gravely damaging to U.S. interests.

If this policy continues unaltered, it could bring added turmoil to the island, inevitably followed by renewed efforts of desperate Haitians willing to risk the dangerous 800-mile voyage to Florida.

Such an exodus would greatly embarrass the Bush White House, just as it did the Clinton administration, particularly as the interdiction pact has now lapsed.

The "Democratic Convergence," a 15-party coalition of mainly micro-factions that vehemently reject Aristide's legitimacy based on charges of electoral fraud in last May's senatorial balloting, has named Gerard Gourgue "Provisional President." This is bringing chaos closer. Gourgue called for the return of the commanders of Haiti's repressive armed forces, expelled by the U.S. military in 1994.

Despite its modest popular standing, the convergence effectively has been awarded a crippling de facto veto by Sen. Jesse Helms, Aristide's relentless avenger, with U.S. policymakers also insisting that it is the democratic alternative.

The convergence is the main obstacle to negotiations and the resumption of aid. Aristide first met with its leaders in February to discuss possible solutions to the stalemate. Regrettably, his offer to include some convergence leaders in his government and appoint a new impartial electoral body were peremptorily rejected. Aristide's call for initiating a dialogue also was rejected by the convergence, though he has offered to move up the next round of legislative elections.

The State Department and National Security Council always have viewed Aristide as a liability rather than as the island's principal political asset. Allegations against him routinely understate his wide support. Aristide towers over potential alternatives and has worked hard to cooperate with Washington's often arrogant demands.

In December, the Clinton administration agreed to restore aid once the Haitian leader adopted eight conditions that addressed electoral and economic reforms along with narcotics smuggling, illegal migration and human-rights violations. Later, Aristide agreed to all of them.

After several requests by Haiti for help in addressing the election issue, the Organization of American States belatedly decided to dispatch a delegation to discuss election reforms. Since Washington largely determines OAS Haiti policy, its initiative's bona fides will require scrutiny.

LITTLE SUPPORT

There is a danger here, which comes far less from the fact that relatively few Haitians have any respect for the opposition coalition. Any outside imposed government and revitalized military, as hinted by Gourgue, could destroy the country's fragile human-rights situation, its enfeebled judicial system and its lame democratization process.

The Bush administration would do well to honor the commitments made by President Clinton.

Failing to display some basic amity to Haiti's population will only add more yellowed pages to the profoundly jaundiced and mean-spirited links to Port-au-Prince, which historically have been characterized by condescension rather than respect.

[From the Columbia, Missouri, Tribune Online, July 8, 2000]

CITIZENS OF PERU LEFT TO FIGHT FOR NATION'S DEMOCRACY

Editor, the Tribune: Scores of women, clad in black and carrying coffins symbolizing the death of democracy in Peru, Marched through the streets of Lima on June 28m demanding new balloting in protest of President Alberto Fujimori's scandal-ridden reelection. As the march headed toward the hotel hosting the Organization of American States delegation, the women faced a barrage of tear gas from the security forces. The OAS, much like the United States, has been largely ineffective in trying to promote democracy in what has become Fujimori country. Like a couple of ill-whelped dogs, the OAS and the United States have skulked away from the indignant attitude of "El Chino" and left the Peruvian people to be the sole defenders of the nation's democracy.

Even with the recent OAS proposal to reform the system, there are no guarantees that the government will follow the guidelines. In fact, Fujimori has amply shown that he has nothing but contempt for both OAS secretary-general César Gaviria and the Clinton administration, but as the police attack on the women's march reveals—and as Bastille Day approaches—he does indeed have good grounds to fear the citizenry who will no longer tolerate his false claims to power. Where else can change begin but at home? Hopefully, the recent mass demonstrations will spark positive change toward democratic reforms even if a feckless OAS is unable to mandate new elections.

HOLOCAUST VICTIMS INSURANCE RELIEF ACT

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 2693, the Holocaust Victims Insurance Relief Act, a bill to require all companies operating in the United States to disclose the names on Holocaust-era insurance policies. The legislation would also enable survivors to access to this information by establishing a Holocaust Insurance Registry at the National Archives.

At its core, this is a moral issue. Insurance companies holding Holocaust-era policies have a responsibility to disclose any information that will help survivors finally reclaim their policies with dignity and equity. In many cases, company archives contain the only existing files related to the countless policies that were stolen from victims of Nazi ghettos and death camps.

Just one year ago, on July 17, 2000, the United States and Germany signed an Executive Agreement establishing the German Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future," a \$5 billion fund to settle all Holocaust-era claims, including slave and forced labor, banking, and insurance. During the preceding ceremony, U.S. Holocaust Envoy Stuart Eizenstat said, "It is critically important that all German insurance companies cooperate with the process established by the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, or ICHEIC. This includes publishing lists of unpaid insurance policies and subjecting themselves to audit. Unless German insurance companies make these lists available through ICHEIC, potential claimants cannot know their eligibility, and the insurance companies will have failed to assume their moral responsibility."

Unfortunately, little progress has been made since then and the urgency of this issue grows as Holocaust survivors are dying every day. Although the ICHEIC was established in 1998 to expeditiously resolve unpaid Holocaust-era claims, more than 84% of the over 72,675 claims inquiries filed remain unresolved because the claimants cannot identify the company holding their assets.

Furthermore, it is outrageous that regardless of their level of compliance with ICHEIC rules insurance companies that contribute to the Foundation fund are given a minimal \$150 million cap on all liabilities, virtual legal immunity in U.S. courts, and an arbitrary January 31, 2002 expiration of their obligation to accept claims.

The insurance companies must be held accountable. H.R. 2693 will ensure that Congress will not stand by and allow them to shirk their obligation.

This bill also expresses congressional support for states seeking to adopt and enforce their own laws to address the issue of unpaid Holocaust-era policies, and recognizes the efforts of legislatures in California, New York, Florida, Washington, and Minnesota. I also understand that similar efforts are underway in the legislatures of Texas, Illinois, and Massachusetts.

California led the nation in enacting a Holocaust insurance reporting statute at the state

level, and it has provided the insurance companies with a powerful incentive to comply with the law. It is time for us to extend this relief to survivors across the country.

I would also like to thank my colleague Representative ENGEL, who is an original cosponsor of this bill and who was instrumental in introducing similar legislation in the 105th and 106th Congresses.

Less than six months from today, the ICHEIC deadline for accepting claims will expire. We must act swiftly to make sure that survivors have the necessary information to file their rightful claims. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and I hope we can bring it to the floor for a vote in the near future.

TRIBUTE TO GITTA NAGEL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to a dedicated champion of Jewish affairs and public service, Mrs. Gitta Nagel of California, who will soon be receiving an Honorary Doctorate degree from Bar-Ilan University in Israel. Mrs. Nagel has continually strived to ensure a brighter, more cohesive future for the Jewish community by encouraging stronger academic programs and an everlasting remembrance of the Holocaust.

As a young child living in Amsterdam during the Holocaust, Gitta saw first hand the destructive force and brutality of the Nazi regime, an experience that would continue to drive her throughout her life as a philanthropist. After the war, she emigrated to the United States where she attended UCLA and met her future husband, Jack Nagel.

Through her efforts to promote a stronger Jewish community, Gitta Nagel has held leadership roles in numerous organizations including the United Jewish Communities, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, and Israel Bonds. In addition, she was a founding member of the Golda Meir Club, an organization that supports the State of Israel through her annual purchase of \$5,000 worth of Israeli government bonds. Gitta also started a chapter of Bnei Akiva, a testament to her unwavering support for Zionism and the State of Israel.

She has also shown a perpetual commitment to a prosperous future through her support of education. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that Gitta is an original founder of Yeshiva Yavneh of Los Angeles High Schools. She had lent her support to Bar-Ilan University through an endowment for immigrant students, doctoral fellowships, research grants, and numerous other academic programs.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to Gitta Nagel's unwavering support for Jewish organizations, I would like to both emphasize and commend her work to preserve the memory of the Holocaust. Gitta has selflessly worked to secure a special place in history for Holocaust victims. She has given incredible amounts of time, energy and resources to make sure that the atrocity of the Holocaust is never forgotten.

The Nagel's are founders of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and are members of the Board of Trustees of

the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. In 1985, Gitta spoke before the Federation of Humanities in Stockholm, Sweden in a ceremony recognizing the 40th anniversary of the disappearance of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat responsible for saving the lives of over 100,000 Jews during the end of World War II, including my wife Annette and me. She was also a featured speaker before the Austrian Parliament during the celebration of the 90th birthday of Simon Wisenthal.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in Congress to join me in recognizing Gitta Nagel's contributions and commitments to Jewish affairs and community service worldwide. She has had a major impact in strengthening the ties of the Jewish people and ensuring that the Holocaust will never be repeated. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Gitta Nagel for her very deserved honor.

TRIBUTE TO KOREY STRINGER

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened to share the news of the passing of Korey Stringer.

Fans of football, the Minnesota Vikings, and the community of the greater St. Paul and Minneapolis area have suffered a great loss. All-Pro Offensive Tackle Korey Stringer was more than a great athlete; he was a great American.

This native of Warren, Ohio has his life cut short while training for the game he loved. However, in that short life Korey contributed much to the teams he played for and communities he lived in. While in high school at Warren Harding High School, in my district, Korey personally achieved status as an all-Ohio player twice and was a unanimous All-American his senior year. As a senior, Korey recorded an incredible 52 tackles as a defensive tackle and was named Ohio Division I Lineman of the Year. These accomplishments are impressive, but Korey was always more proud of Warren Harding's undefeated season that led to a state title his junior year. Korey was a player that was consistently concerned with those around him and made every effort possible to aid them.

Many players with impressive high school accolades never quite make it in college, but this was not the case for Korey Stringer. After doing a fine job representing his hometown, Korey did an excellent job representing the entire state while playing for Ohio State University. In his first year, Korey was selected as Big Ten Freshman of the Year. The awards continued for Korey as he was named Big Ten Offensive Lineman of the Year for both 1993 and 1994, Ohio State's Most Valuable Player in 1994, and two time All-American.

After being drafted as the 24th overall selection in the 1995 draft, Korey joined the Minnesota Vikings. He played with dedication to the game, the fans, and his teammates as he only missed three games in six seasons. Last season was a breakout year for Korey as he was named to the All-Pro team and helped Robert Smith set the team records for single-season and career rushing total. Playing as an offensive lineman, it is hard to assess the