

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO THE STUDENTS OF MARYVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the students of Maryville Elementary School in Maryville, Illinois, and their important and heartwarming efforts to help those affected by terrorism.

On October 11, 2001, President Bush made a request of the children of America. He challenged each of them to earn and send in one dollar. This money, sent by the kindness of the children of the United States, will be used to reach out to the unfortunate children in far off Afghanistan.

The students of Maryville Elementary School heard and met that challenge. They sponsored a school-wide fundraising effort—spearheaded by their Citizenship Committee—during this last October and November. Once they were finished, several of their students visited my Collinsville office to present me personally with their donation: \$198.20, which I have passed on to the Fund here in Washington, D.C.

The students, parents, faculty, and members of the Maryville community should be recognized for their fine efforts. The terrorists believed they could accomplish their goals with the murder of American innocents; but the American citizens have responded with aid to the innocent of Afghanistan. Nothing else could better show how utterly al Qaeda has failed.

Mr. Speaker, as President Bush said in his announcement of the Fund for Afghan Children, "One of the truest weapons that we have against terrorism is to show the world the true strength of character of the American people." The children of Maryville Elementary have shown that character, and they deserve our thanks. May God bless them, and may God bless the United States of America.

HONORING LEBANESE INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the Lebanese American community in celebrating the 58th anniversary of Lebanese independence.

On November 22, 1943 Lebanon obtained its independence from France. Shortly thereafter, Lebanon became a founding member of both the United Nations and League of Arab States. Signaling its commitment to the idea that human rights were global and that is was ready to be a full-partner in the post World War II world, Lebanon played an integral part

in the drafting of one of the UN's most distinguished documents—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As one of the world's early cradles of civilization, Lebanon has long been held up as an example of prosperity and perseverance. In its recent history, Lebanon has suffered a great deal, but to truly understand the spirit of the Lebanese people one only need to look at the way in which they have rebuilt their nation. While much remains to be done, the nation's progress is an example from which we can all learn.

The United States and Lebanon have been blessed by a historically strong friendship, owing in part to the emigration of Lebanon's sons and daughters. They embraced America with open arms and their contributions helped build a greater nation. This relationship is best exemplified by the following familiar words, first spoken by a proud Lebanese American: "Are you a politician asking what your country can do for you or a zealous one asking what you can do for your country?" Those are the words of Kahlil Gibran, a poet who frequently wove beauty and justice into his work and in the process touched the heart and meaning of America.

Today, I think we have reason to reflect on another of Gibran's contributions, one that holds a great lesson for us all. "To be a good citizen is to acknowledge the other person's rights before asserting your own, but always to be conscious of your own."

Since 1965, nearly 100,000 new immigrants have come from Lebanon. My home state of Michigan has one of the largest Lebanese American communities in the country and it has been actively involved in the life of our great state. The Lebanese community willingly shares its culture and values not only with Michigan, but with the entire nation. The result has been innumerable contributions to the arts, sports, medicine, politics, education, science and industry.

Mr. Speaker, I join the people of Lebanon, those of Lebanese ancestry around the world and the Lebanese American community in celebrating Lebanese Independence Day. I salute all of them for the tremendous contributions to freedom and human dignity which they have made.

CONGRATULATING DR. PETE MEHAS

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Pete Mehas on the occasion of his recognition as the 2001 Breaking Barriers for Children Award Honoree. Break the Barriers, Inc., partners able-bodied performers with disabled youth to explore and break barriers and celebrate all levels of victories and achievements. This award is in-

tended to honor the contribution of an outstanding individual who has made service to children a priority in his or her life.

Dr. Mehas has a lengthy list of credentials and service to the community, State of California, and our great Nation. He has promoted education under governors and presidents alike. His expertise and advice are sought by leaders from all levels of government.

His resume includes service under former California Governor Deukmejian as the director of the Governor's Office of Education Planning and Policy Committee and on the State Board of Education. Dr. Mehas has also served on the U.S. Secretary of Education's National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility and former President George Bush's advisory committee on Latino education. He has received numerous awards and was elected Fresno County Superintendent of Schools in 1990 and is currently serving his third consecutive term with unanimous support from Fresno area Democrat and Republican legislators.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Dr. Pete Mehas for this award. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating this dedicated educator and wishing him many more years of continued success as he receives the 2001 Breaking Barriers for Children Award.

A TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE S. RUDY

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am especially pleased to rise today to acknowledge Stephanie S. Rudy for the depth and diversity of contributions she has made to so many local organizations in Colorado.

Stephanie's energy is boundless, her smile matchless, and her compassion far-reaching. She is a dedicated advocate for the arts and one of the rarest and most wonderful talents in our community. This year she was selected by the Denver Foundation as the recipient of the "Minoru Yasui Community Volunteer Award," which recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the city of Denver and their community through volunteerism. She also was chosen by the Boulder Chamber of Commerce to receive the "Women Who Light Up The Community" honor.

Among the many organizations Stephanie has enriched with her talents are the "Open Studios" for artists and art lovers throughout the Boulder area, the Colorado Music Festival, the Conference on World Affairs at the University of Colorado, the Boulder County Safehouse for women and children, the Boulder Community Hospital, and the Boulder Police Department. To serve so broadly, so successfully, and with such grace, heart, and spirit is deserving of recognition.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

I first met Stephanie when, as a representative of "Open Studios," she enlisted my help in inviting Mr. William Ivey, chairman of the National Endowment for the arts, to visit Colorado. Through her coordinating genius with the Colorado Council on the Arts, the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts, the Arvada Center for the Arts, Chairman Ivey's office and my staff, Stephanie booked the chairman to speak before full audiences in Denver, Arvada, and Boulder. This special engagement with the chairman was a triumph only to be dreamed of by others in Colorado.

For the past 4 years Stephanie has been the personable Steering Committee Chair in charge of Publicity and Marketing for "Open Studios." This program is a self-guided tour of over 130 studios of Boulder's finest visual artists. Under her inspired direction, attendance has increased nearly thirty percent, and "Open Studios" has garnered generous coverage in local and national newspapers and magazines. Her creativity in designing the unique Press Kits has generated remarkable public participation in this exceptional annual event.

In addition to the incomparable work Stephanie does for "Open Studios," she also serves as a member of the Board of the Colorado Music Festival. This festival orchestra has been described as "the best orchestra is Colorado," and "the most important orchestra between Chicago and Los Angeles." To celebrate the Colorado Music Festival's 25th Anniversary, Stephanie graciously gave me the tremendous honor of having the U.S. flag presented to the festival's accomplished young conductor, Mr. Michael Christie, for his debut season.

Stephanie has also been a member of the General Committee for the Conference on World Affairs, an annual event held at the University of Colorado each April. She has been in charge of publicity for this conference that is attended annually by over 50,000 people. She has recently been asked to use her extraordinary skills as a member of the committee to plan the World Affairs Athenaeum.

The Boulder Police Department has benefited for three years from her volunteer work as a Victim's Advocate. This program requires Stephanie to respond to the scene of a crime and inform victims and witnesses of their rights, give them resources, and help them find constructive ways to cope with incidents. She has dealt sympathetically with victims of sexual assault, assault, bank robberies, domestic violence, and harassment. She has also worked sensitively with groups of people affected by the suicide of others.

Stephanie has enhanced the "Chocolate Lover's Fling," among other projects for the Boulder Country Safehouse, a human service organization serving women and children victimized by domestic violence. She cochairs the arts committee of "Wine Women and Food," an event sponsored by the Boulder Community Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in expressing our gratitude to Stephanie Rudy for touching our community socially, culturally, and artistically. Her constant and loving contributions go beyond reckoning, and I wish her good health and happiness in the future.

PARAGUAY: A TERRORIST UTOPIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker. With the United States war on terrorism gaining steam, Paraguay, a nation with a disturbing Pro-Nazi past, could become a country of increasing importance for United States foreign policy makers due to the high volume of narcotics traffickers now occurring there as well as various militant movements in that nation, producing an alarmingly volatile situation, according to United States officials. Ross Knutson, Research Associate at the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), has recently authored an article of utmost importance entitled, *Paraguay: A terrorist's utopia*. The article examines United States monitoring of the clandestine activity in Paraguay that has been occurring for a number of years there. For a long time, the United States as well as the intelligent services of a number of Southern Cone countries has known about the involvement of radical Islamic terrorist organizations in the tri-border region, where Paraguay borders Argentina and Brazil. There is very strong evidence indicating that such extremist groups authored the bombing of two Jewish facilities in Buenos Aires in the early 1990s with the loss of over 100 lives.

In the wake of the terrorist strikes in the United States, Paraguay's recent history of serving as a staging ground for such militant Islamic groups as Hezbollah and the Islamic Jihad will certainly deserve closer scrutiny. Paraguayan authorities as well as the governments of Brazil and Argentina are beginning to take a more active role in monitoring these groups especially around Ciudad del Este, a well-known Paraguayan hub for such alleged terrorist activity.

Despite such efforts by the tri-border countries, U.S. authorities are becoming increasingly worried over the lack of local control over the region's numerous airstrips and waterways which terrorist groups could use to communicate and move operatives and supplies with near anonymity. As such, the United States is beginning to take greater action, with Washington offering its Special Forces to train and advise the Paraguayan military and national police on a variety of antiterrorism and anti-drug tactics. This step is associated with the United States implementing a crackdown on the drug trade by way of its increased efforts through Plan Colombia. If the war on terrorism lasts for years, as the Bush administration has stated it will, the United States could soon find itself involved in a series of protracted and complicated campaigns in countries such as Paraguay. As such, Knutson's article is of utmost importance since any U.S. activities in that country appear to be long-stayed.

THE COUNCIL ON HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS

The Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), a nonprofit, tax-exempt independent research and information organization, was founded at the end of 1975 to promote the common interest of the hemisphere, raise the visibility and increase the importance of the inter-American relationship, as well as encourage the formulation of rational and constructive U.S. policies towards Latin America. In 1982, COHA's board of trustees

voted to expand its mandate to include monitoring Canadian/Latin American relations. Since its inception, COHA has been one of the most active and broadest-based U.S. private bodies dealing with the entire spectrum of political, economic and diplomatic issues, as well as the economic and political challenges confronting the Inter-American nations.

From its founding, COHA's board consisted of the leadership of some of this country's most important trade unions, professional organizations and religious groups, as well as distinguished civic and academic figures who joined together to advance their common belief in support of representative government and pluralistic institutions throughout the hemisphere.

COHA subscribes to no specific political credo nor does it maintain partisan allegiances. It support open and democratic political processes just as it consistently has condemned authoritarian regimes of any stripe that fail to provide their populations with even minimal standards of political freedoms, economic and social justice, personal security and civic guarantees.

COHA is entirely staffed by a professional core, who contribute their services, supplemented by a large number of volunteer graduate and undergraduate students who often receive academic credit from their home institutions for the experience gained through their work here. Over the years, retired government employees also have cooperated with COHA in preparing monographs on such topics as regional development, trade policies, technology transfer, the operations of multinational corporations and the controversial development strategies of the international agencies. The staff is assisted by a number of extra-mural professionals coming from an academic background who serve as COHA senior research fellows, who are generally considered to be leaders in their respective fields of expertise.

COHA's analyses are frequently sought after by the major media, with its long-time director, Larry Burns, as well as other senior personnel regularly being called upon by the major national and international press, along with network radio and TV public affairs programs, to provide commentary on breaking regional issues. COHA contributors also appear regularly in the opinion columns on editorial pages throughout the country, and its findings frequently have been heard and seen over the BBC, Voice of America, CBC, Radio Marti, Radio Havana and U.S. radio programs. COHA personnel also have appeared one or more times on CNN, C-Span, Firing Line, CrossFire, Nightline, the CBS, ABC and NBC evening news, as well as the network Larry King program, "Good Morning America" and the "Today Show," and many National Public Radio public affairs programs.

COHA's personnel have been interviewed, or the organization's findings have been referred to in such publications as Time, Newsweek, the Atlantic Monthly, U.S. News and World Report, New York Magazine, Harper's, the New Yorker, the New Statesman, Barron's and Maclean's. On almost a daily basis, the results of COHA's work appear in the press of Latin America and Europe. COHA also has been cited in numerous occasions in the New York Times, the Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, the Christian Science Monitor, the London Observer, the Boston Globe, the Miami Herald, the Toronto Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, the London Independent and the Guardian, among many other newspapers.

COHA has been referred to in the floor of the Senate as "one of our Nation's more respected bodies of scholars and policymakers."