

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CALIFORNIA AND MATSUYAMA, JAPAN

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, for over twenty years the City of Sacramento, California and Matsuyama, Japan have shared a special relationship as sister cities. This partnership has given birth to cultural exchanges that have enriched the lives of the residents in both cities. A new art exhibition that will be unveiled on July 6, 2002, is a testimony to this ongoing relationship.

The Miura Museum of Art in Matsuyama will unveil the "Serene Beauty: Lucie Rie Retrospective" exhibit to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the artist's birth. The exhibit features the work of Lucie Rie, one of the most outstanding potters of the 20th-century and a major influence on the world of ceramic art. The exhibit of Lucie Rie's exceptional ceramic work at the Miura Museum of Art in Matsuyama is only the second showing of her work in Japan.

This exhibit would have not been possible without the partnership with Sacramento residents who loaned the museum a large portion of the exhibit that will be displayed. Additionally, the museum has invited residents of Sacramento to participate in the exhibit opening and panel discussion honoring Lucie Rie and her passion for creating ceramic art.

I would like to commend each of participants who have loaned pieces from their collection in order to share their appreciation of art with the residents of Japan. The sister city partnership has developed into a friendship which complements the diverse background of the residents of Sacramento and Matsuyama and I look forward to the continued exchange of cultural treasures between our two cities.

HONORING RUFINA A. HERNANDEZ, ESQ.

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the splendid efforts and notable accomplishments of an extraordinary woman in the 1st Congressional District of Colorado. It is both fitting and proper that we recognize this outstanding community leader for her exceptional record of civic leadership and invaluable service. It is to commend this outstanding citizen that I rise to honor Rufina A. Hernandez, Esq.

Ms. Hernandez has amassed a distinguished record of leadership and service to our community. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from the University of New Mexico and her Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University Law Center. Ms. Hernandez practiced law for eight years at the Legal Aid Society of Denver specializing in Family Law, Public Utility Regulation and Consumer Protection. She served as the Executive Director of the State Bar of New Mexico and was previously the Assistant Dean for

Student Affairs at the University of Denver College of Law.

Presently, Ms. Hernandez is the Executive Director of the Latin American Research and Service Agency (LARASA), a preeminent community based non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health, education and self sufficiency of Colorado's Latino community. Under her leadership, LARASA has made a tremendous impact on our city and state by increasing awareness about issues affecting the Latino community and developing effective public policies and programs to address those issues. Ms. Hernandez has been a powerful advocate for change. Through her leadership, LARASA continues to bring tangible benefits to our community through the Center for Community and Behavioral Health, Centro de la Familia—the Latino Public Policy Center, the Data Resource Center and through the Proyecto Educar and Amigos de la Comunidad programs that increase cultural competency and Latino involvement in our schools.

Ms. Hernandez serves on the National Center for Law and Education Board of Directors, the Women's Lobby Board, the Colorado Association of Non Profit Organizations, the Child Health Advocates Board of Directors and the Governor's Utility Consumer Advisory Board. She co-chairs the Latino Jewish Coalition and the Latino Campaign for Education and also serves on the Mayor's Latino Advisory Council.

It comes as no surprise that Ms. Hernandez' commitment and service has earned her several awards including the American Jewish Committee Professional Award, the National Council of LARASA Special Advocacy Award, the American Jurisprudence Award for Academic Achievement, and the University of Denver Outstanding Staff Award.

While we are saddened that Ms. Hernandez will be leaving our community for a position with the National Education Association, I am confident that her leadership, skill and experience will be of great benefit to the cause of public education in our country.

Please join me in commending Rufina Hernandez, Esq. It is the strong leadership she exhibits on a daily basis that continually enhances our lives and builds a better future for all Americans.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF TONY AND MURIEL MANSOUR

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two dear friends, Tony and Muriel Mansour, who will join with family and friends this Saturday, June 29th to celebrate their fifty years of marriage. My wife, Gayle, and I want to add our congratulations to Tony and Muriel on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.

I have known the Mansour family since I was growing up on the east side of Flint, Michigan. The Mansour's lived one street over from the Kildee's, and the Mansour and Kildee children played together.

Mr. Speaker, both Tony and Muriel have been active members of our community in the

City of Flint and Genesee County for many years. Tony was a distinguished attorney for many years before being elected Genesee County Circuit Judge in 1968. He served with great distinction until he retired from the bench. In addition to resuming his successful law practice, Tony has been active in the Flint Rotary Club, being elected Club President in 1996. Tony is a past President of the Men's Club at Flint Holy Rosary Catholic Church and of the Knights of Columbus in Davison, Michigan. Tony has also been a leader in Flint's large and diverse Arab-American community, helping to found the Arab-American Heritage Council.

Muriel has been active in her own right. She has served as president of Heartbeat of Flint, as well as president of the Flint chapter of the American Business Women's Association. Muriel has also served on numerous community organization boards including the Children's Museum of Flint, the Catholic Social Services, the Genesee County Bar Auxiliary, the Flint Osteopathic Hospital Auxiliary, and Allegro (the volunteers for the Flint Institute of Music). For the past eight years, Muriel has worked as a volunteer at the Genesee-Lapeer Chapter of the Red Cross.

Mr. Speaker, the City of Flint and Genesee County is a much better place in which to live due to the efforts of Tony and Muriel Mansour. Gayle and I value them as dear friends and wish them well on the occasion of their golden wedding anniversary.

A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT WUSSLER FOR 19 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE RED CROSS

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to commend Robert Wussler for his 19 years of public service with the San Bernardino County Chapter of the American Red Cross. Under his leadership, the Red Cross chapter has quadrupled its budget and modernized its efforts to better serve the citizens of the Inland Empire.

Mr. Wussler began his tenure in 1983 as the accountant for the chapter in San Bernardino County, which is the main population center of my home district. After serving in that capacity for seven years, he became the chief executive officer of the newly created Inland Empire Chapter in 1990.

Since that time, the chapter has grown its budget from \$300,000 to more than \$1.2 million, and increased its staff from seven to 15 professional employees. At the same time, he has reduced the chapter's dependency on United Way funding from 83 percent in the 1980s to 5 percent today. The chapter is now computerized, centralized and very well organized, thanks to Mr. Wussler's efforts. It recently received a \$1 million gift from a special donor.

The improvement of the San Bernardino Chapter under Mr. Wussler's direction was recognized by the American Red Cross headquarters. Two decades ago, the chapter was considered near the bottom among chapters across the country. It is now ranked among the 100 best of 1,125 nationally. Mr. Wussler

himself received the 1997 Golden Bear Award for Management from the State of California, and the National Tiffany Award, the highest granted to Red Cross paid staff.

Mr. Wussler and the chapter's board of directors in 1994 created the National Nurse Assistant Training program, which is gratefully supported by local hospitals and trains and certifies 200 students a year as nursing assistants. The chapter has also implemented a home health care training program and an acute care program to help nurse assistants further their career.

Most important to the citizens of San Bernardino County, the Red Cross has been a lifeline for thousands of people who have lost their homes or seen their lives thrown into turmoil by disasters like the Big Bear and Landers Earthquakes of 1993 and the terrible floods that wiped out communities from Forest Glen to Mentone in 1999. The chapter has also helped in countless small disasters that have thrown individual families from their homes, and helped in planning for the disasters we will face in the future.

Mr. Speaker, after 19 years with the San Bernardino Chapter, Robert Wussler has decided to retire. I ask you and my colleagues to please join me in thanking him for a career dedicated to public service and aiding the afflicted, and wish him well in his future endeavors.

MEETING WITH CROWN PRINCE
ABDULLAH

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, this week I will travel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to meet with Crown Prince Abdullah and other Saudi officials for the third time since the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11. As a result of my previous visits, I have become convinced that it is in the best interest of the United States to remain actively engaged in a constructive dialogue and working partnership with Saudi officials and their leader Crown Prince Abdullah.

My initial reaction to traveling thousands of miles to the Saudi Kingdom, in early October 2001, where 15 out of 19 hijackers as well as Osama bin Laden hailed from, was negative. I saw little value in traveling to a region where even in the wake of over 3,000 American deaths, there remained an undeniable hatred of America, continued financial support for fervent extremism, and ties to terrorist organizations that threaten our nation's interest and security. However, I have changed my initial reluctance to engage Saudi Arabia, though not my objection to many of its policies, because Saudi Arabia lies not only at the heart of the problem facing the United States in the Middle East and the Islamic world, but they are also our best hope for resolving these same problems.

My meetings with Crown Prince Abdullah in Riyadh and Jeddah have been candid and frank discussions regarding many aspects of U.S.-Saudi bilateral relations. No subject has been taboo. The Crown Prince and I both voiced criticism of each others country's policies, but we also reiterated the longstanding

friendship and alliance between America and Saudi Arabia and our many common interests and goals.

The Crown Prince impresses me as a man with a vision of peace and coexistence between Israelis and Arabs; moreover, he is willing to risk his personal prestige for a quest for peace. The Crown Prince is a practical and logical man. He is tested and knows the value of leadership. I am convinced that the Crown Prince senses an historic opportunity to build confidence and seek peace from the extraordinary tragedies of the last 20 months and appreciates this opportunity to lead the Arab world away from extreme radicalism and toward normalizing relations with Israel.

My optimism is checked, however, by a recurrent fundamental failure by Saudi Arabia to appreciate the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from an Israeli perspective and to recognize the sense of vulnerability of the Israeli people. In fact, the Crown Prince often suggests that American policy in the Middle East is unbalanced and too favorable to Israel. Ironically, it is the Saudi policy toward Israel that too often lacks objectivity.

Since September 11, there has been much criticism of the Saudi government in our country and internationally. Much of the criticism is justified, and I have joined my colleagues in Congress in voicing my concerns and objections when I deemed it necessary and in the best interest of the nation. I have been a vocal critic of harmful policies carried out by the Saudi government or Saudi nationals, including their lack of democracy, freedom of the press and abominable treatment of women. I have also strongly condemned Saudi connections to the financing and support of international terrorist organizations, unwillingness to unequivocally condemn suicide bombings perpetrated by Palestinian terrorists, financial payoffs to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers, and their financial backing of extremist schools in Pakistan and around the world that preach intolerance and hate. Like many Americans, I am also angered and disturbed by the virulent anti-American and anti-Semitic rhetoric that is published in the government-run press and echoed repeatedly by Saudis throughout the kingdom. The Saudi government cannot have it both ways; if they are truly committed to peaceful coexistence with Israel, they cannot feed the fires of those who hate and are bent on the destruction of the peace process and the State of Israel itself.

Faced with growing American and international criticism, Crown Prince Abdullah has reevaluated the effect of Saudi policies and is seeking to make fundamental changes in the Saudi Kingdom. Since assuming leadership in 1995, Crown Prince Abdullah has taken initial steps to reform Saudi Arabia's economic and political structure and is making serious attempts to root out corruption. The Crown Prince is also the leading advocate for Saudi Arabia's obtaining membership in the World Trade Organization, WTO. I strongly support this effort and believe that WTO membership would lead to greater accountability and transparency in the Saudi Kingdom and, more importantly, would connect Saudis to the global economy.

Most important of all, Crown Prince Abdullah brought Saudi Arabia into the international spotlight last February by initiating a proposal that offers Arab normalization of rela-

tions with the State of Israel, if Israel returns to the pre-1967 borders. While the Saudi plan maybe viewed by some as a non-starter, an initial position for negotiations, or even worse a public relations ploy, it should not be altogether ignored or minimized. This initiative is a significant signal that Crown Prince Abdullah will be an active participant in the elusive peace process and may be the most progressive step toward Arab-Israeli reconciliation taken by any Arab leader since Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat traveled to Jerusalem and King Hussein of Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994. Unfortunately, during Camp David II in 2000, too many Arab leaders remained on the sidelines while a comprehensive peace proposal was being circulated. Crown Prince Abdullah seems to recognize the lost opportunity that occurred during Camp David II, and in a promising sign he clearly stated to me his intention to be actively involved in any new effort for a comprehensive peace agreement.

The United States would be ill-advised to disengage from Saudi Arabia or its leader. As the heart and soul of the Muslim world, Saudi Arabia is home to Islam's two holiest places, Mecca and Medina. It is the Muslim world and, in particular, Arab states that the United States must actively engage in dialogue to promote educational reform, greater religious freedom, democracy, freedom of the press and expanded rights for women. We need to press the Saudi government, especially Crown Prince Abdullah who has significant weight in the Arab and Islamic world, to address religious freedom and human rights. At the same time, we must seek the advice and assistance of prominent Saudis to help America strengthen and improve our standing in the Muslim world. It would be short-sighted to ignore the perceptions and beliefs of more than one billion people.

Saudi Arabia is also integral to our policy of containing and eventually removing Saddam Hussein from power. Saudi cooperation with the U.S. and other allies in enforcing Operation Southern Watch over Southern Iraq has been considerable. During my visit to Saudi Arabia this week, I will reiterate that Iraq repeatedly fails to comply with United Nations (UN) resolutions, continues to block unfettered UN weapons inspections, is stockpiling weapons of mass destruction, harbors and supports terrorists, and poses a grave threat to the security of the United States and every nation in the region. It is critical to the United States that Crown Prince Abdullah and Saudi Arabia assist the Bush Administration in building a coalition of support to remove the threat of Saddam Hussein to the region.

My visit to Saudi Arabia is also another opportunity to send a message from the American people to the Saudi government and its citizens that the United States intends on continuing our engagement and partnership with their country; however, I would be remiss if I ignored the continued presence and activity of dangerous extremists in the Saudi Kingdom and the danger they pose to America and our allies. Ultimately, the future of U.S.-Saudi relations hinge on the efforts of Saudi leaders to root out extremist elements within the kingdom and choke off all financial support emanating from the kingdom to terrorist organizations around the world.

As for Saudi Arabia's leading role in the Middle East, it is incumbent on Crown Prince